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RICHARD ROLLE

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SOME MINOR WORKS OF RICHARD ROLLE

WITH

THE PRIVITY OF THE PASSION

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THE PRIVITY OF THE PASSION

BY

S. BONAVENTURA

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IN THE WAY OF THE SAINTS
ENGLISH MYSTICS

Editor of ROLLE'S FORM OF PERFECT LIVING, etc.
EARLY ENGLISH INSTRUCTIONS AND DEVOTIONS

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" Suffer me not, O my God, to forget Thee in the dark."

Henry Vaughan.

" Illuminans tu mirabiliter a montibus æternis."

Ps. LXXV. 5. (*Vulg.*)

TABLE OF CONTENTS.

INTRODUCTION 7

PRAISE OF THE NAME OF JESUS 47

ON THE NAME OF JESUS 54

AN EPISTLE ON SALVATION BY LOVE OF THE NAME OF JESUS 56

OF IMPERFECT CONTRITION 62

EGO DORMIO ET COR MEUM VIGILAT 63

CONCERNING THE LIFE OF A WOMAN ENCLOSED FOR LOVE OF CHRIST 78

A GREAT CLERK 79

THE COMMANDMENT OF LOVE TO GOD 80

THE GIFTS OF THE HOLY GHOST 92

THE MIRROR OF S. EDMUND 94

ON PRAYER 148

MEDITATION ON THE PASSION AND OF 3 ARROWS ON DOOMSDAY 161

NOTE 175

THE PRIVITY OF THE PASSION, by S. Bonaventura 178

INTRODUCTION.

THE bogey of the "Dark Ages" lies a little less darkly across the public mind than was the case some years ago; but there is perhaps still a too widely-spread impression that the centuries between the fifth and the fifteenth are extraordinarily inferior to the enlightenment of recent times.

No doubt the sixth to the ninth centuries in Western Europe were marked by turmoil, but learning could be found, now in Ireland, kept safe by a sea usually unpleasant to voyage on, then in Northumbria, elsewhere in Gaul, or in remote parts along the Baltic coast, on the shores of a Swiss Lake, and in northern Italy.

On the margin of a copy of S. Paul's Epistles found in a monastery in Carinthia there is a poem belonging to the 8th century, which some student wrote in Irish. Dr. Stokes published a translation, of which the following verses will give a good idea:

I and Pangur Bán, my cat,
'Tis a like task we are at;
Hunting mice is his delight,
Hunting words I sit all night.

. . . .

Oftentimes a mouse will stray
In the hero Pangur's way;
Oftentimes my keen thought set
Takes a meaning in its net.

. . . .

So in peace our task we ply,
Pangur Bán, my cat and I ;
In our arts we have our bliss,
I have mine and he has his.

Practice every day has made
Pangur perfect in his trade ;
I get wisdom day and night,
Turning darkness into light.

Twelve centuries do not seem to have changed human or cat nature materially. Baronius' condemnation of the tenth century, *seculum ferreum, plumbeum, obscurum* (the iron, leaden, gloomy age) has been often quoted. Others have declared that the seventh was the low water mark of human intelligence and knowledge.

While masters disagree, those who care for Mysticism will turn to the later Middle Ages : with Verlaine, they will exclaim :

C'est vers le Moyen Age, énorme et délicat,
Qu'il faudrait que mon cœur en panne naviguât,
Loin de nos jours d'esprit charnel et de chair triste :

with him, we would fain go " à la chose vitale."

The creative achievement of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries was great. It has been the fashion to despise the Scholastic Philosophy, that majestic attempt to weld into one, Aristotelian Philosophy and Catholic Theology. No one argues that it was perfect ; flawless philosophy is beyond the scope of finite minds, as it is also quite outside popular interest. Yet philosophy

seems not seldom to endure the passage of time with less breakages and wasting than scientific laws and hypotheses suffer.

Albert the Great the " Universal Doctor," the German Soldier turned Dominican, the Italians, S. Bonaventura the " Seraphic Doctor " and S. Thomas Aquinas the " Angelic Doctor," the great English Franciscan, Duns Scotus the " Subtle Doctor," all of the thirteenth century, will not be wholly forgotten while any men care genuinely for the profound mysteries of Life, Mind, Death and the After Life.

In the region of literature and scholarship these centuries achieved notable things.

The greatest classical Latin Poetry ceased in the first century, B.C., with the deaths of Virgil, Tibullus, Ovid and Horace; but Juvenal, Persius, Martial and Statius kept the flame alive till the middle of the second century after Christ. In the fourth and fifth centuries, Prudentius, Paulinus of Nola and others wrote great Christian hymns which are still among the Church's treasures. After the fifth, Poetry is sparse enough in Western Europe, until thirteenth century Italy gave the world S. Francis' *Song of the Sun*, and Dante dowered it with *La Vita Nuova* and *La Divina Commedia*. New Life indeed!

Moreover, many great scholars and teachers adorned these so-called " dark ages ;" they were to be found even in the seventh and tenth centuries. The former furnishes

Theodore of Tarsus, S. Bede, Benedict Biscop, Aldhelm; the eighth, S. Boniface, and Alcuin; the ninth, Bishop Theodulphus of Orléans, Rabanus Maurus and Alfred the Great; the tenth, Odo of Cluni, Notker, and "England's first Minister of Education," S. Dunstan: the eleventh, Lanfranc, Anselm, Fulbert of Chartres, Abbo of Fleury, Berengarius of Tours. These are but the more famous names.

The twelfth century bristles with learned men. There was Richard of S. Victor, whose two mystical treatises, Benjamin[1] Major and Benjamin Minor, exerted a widespread influence over the mysticism of succeeding centuries. Besides him, there were Bernard of Chartres, Bernard of Cluni, Abelard, Hugh of S. Victor, Adam of S. Victor, Bernard of Clairvaux, Gilbert de la Porrée, William of Malmesbury, Giraldus Cambrensis, Geoffrey of Monmouth, John of Salisbury, Walter Map; with Alberico of Bologna (which is probably the oldest European University), Grossolano of Milan, Godfrey of Viterbo, all three Greek Scholars, and the last an Orientalist as well.

Not only were scholarship, philosophy and theology thus intensely alive and growing and spreading, but, as most of us know, the twelfth and thirteenth centuries

[1] The titles refer to the Vulgate Psalter rendering: *Ibi Benjamin adolescentulus in mentis excessu:* There (is) Benjamin a youth in ecstasy of mind.—lxvii., 27.

were the age of the perfecting of Gothic Architecture in France and England; and a great age of fine Sculpture too.

The Scholastic Philosophy has been compared to a Gothic Cathedral. If there were one, which more than any other, is a striking exemplar of this likeness, surely it was S. Gervais at Soissons. In its immaculate whiteness, harmonious perfection of symmetry, unadorned simplicity, soaring grace and shining translucence, it seemed to symbolise the lucid articulated philosophy of the schoolmen. It was so emphatically a whole. Standing at the west end, the spectator looked past those columns and clustered pillars, on, to the delicately beautiful sanctuary, with its windows of sapphire and purple, scintillating like precious gems in the white purity of Soissons stone. Apparently, nothing remains after repeated bombardment, of the Nave and its aisles; nothing save the Choir and Transepts, the South one of peculiar beauty. It is difficult to help thinking that Soissons' delicacy of symmetry and utter spirituality were an intolerable offence in days of brutal confusion and turmoil. By common admission, it was the purest specimen in France, or anywhere else, of Early Gothic.

The end of the twelfth and beginning of the thirteenth centuries saw the building of the most magnificent architecture in Western Europe. To the early part of the twelfth belong the Choir of S. Denis, S. Etienne at Beauvais, Sens, Vézelay, Southwell, Sherborne, Romsey:

to the latter part, Bishop Roger's work at Ripon's small but winning Minster; Soissons itself, unique Laon with its five towers, Chichester, including Seffrid's supremely lovely Retro-Choir; a great part of Wells, the Nave of Le Mans, and the Choirs of Notre Dame at Paris, of Canterbury and Lincoln.

To the thirteenth belong the great West Fronts of Paris and Amiens, that of S. Etienne at Bourges, *i.e.*, most of it: and the greater part of the matchless Cathedrals, Chartres, Reims, Amiens, Beauvais, Westminster, York, Lincoln and Exeter. In the first half of this century, the Choir of Le Mans, thought by some to be the loveliest in France, certainly only to be rivalled by Beauvais, was built.

If any one fails to see any connexion between the work of Cathedral Building and of Literature, let him compare the awe-inspiring *Dernier Jugement* on the Central Portal of Bourges Cathedral with the closing picture of the Lost in Rolle's *Three Arrows of Doomsday*. One who knows both cannot easily separate them in thought and memory.

It is interesting to remember that the Nave of York was built during Rolle's Lifetime. The great Cluniac Monasteries of Yorkshire had been built earlier, Rievaulx, Fountains, Kirkstall, Byland and Furness.

Cathedral Building went on through the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. Not only York's Nave, but the Octagon and Lady Chapel at Ely, Gloucester's Choir,

and Wells' most exquisite Procession Path, were finished during Rolle's short life : through those years too, the daring men of Beauvais were building those intermediate piers to shore up and maintain the loftiest Cathedral Choir in the world, and, unless Le Mans gain the palm, the loveliest. In the year of his death, 1349, the singularly attractive little Chapel of S. Piat at Chartres was finished.

The sister art of Painting was slower to develope : yet in Italy, Cimabue and Giotto were laying the " Primitive " foundations in the thirteenth century. If painting were undeveloped, the twelfth to the fourteenth centuries were not deprived of colour, for this was the age of the Glass Painters. France led the way in the twelfth century with the windows of S. Denis, the Burying-Place of the Kings of France. The great School of Glass was founded at Chartres : its work remains at Notre Dame there ; at Le Mans, which in the north aisle has glass still older, the " Ascension " window, believed to be eleventh century ; at Bourges, Angers, Poictiers, Tours : some at Canterbury, and fragments at York. In England, York was the great centre of glass painting, as the Minster windows still witness.

Those who have ever crossed the dazzlingly sun-blanched *Place* at Chartres in summer, and, having passed through the Cathedral's West door were blinded by the sudden change into sombrest gloom, and have waited while one by one the jewelled windows emerged from

the shadowed interior; or who have stood beneath the splendour of those strange, rugged, majestic Prophets at Bourges; or have seen the sun at dawn piercing the clerestory windows of Tours' apse; or at noonday throbbing and pulsing through the reds and purples of Le Mans; or who have seen by moonlight, Notre Dame de la Belle Verrière lit up and shining in the midst of the impenetrable darkness of Chartres, will know that men who had such thoughts, and who could create such beauty belonged to no dark ages, but were alive everywhere, full of intellect and on fire with faith.

As Huysmans once wrote :—

> " La Verrerie ! n'est-elle pas l'art où Dieu intervient le plus, l'art que l'être humain ne peut jamais parachever car seul le Ciel peut animer par un rayon de soleil les couleurs et insuffler la Vie aux lignes : en somme, l'homme façonne l'enveloppe, prépare le corps et doit attendre que Dieu y mette l'âme."

Finally, after the theology, philosophy, and learning, after the architecture, sculpture and glass-painting of these " Dark Ages," comes its Plain-Chant; which is said to have " reached something like finality in the time of S. Gregory the Great," when the Gregorian Liturgy was provided with chants for the Kyrie, Gloria and Sanctus. A little later, came chants for the Agnus Dei and about 800, for the Credo. During the ninth century music was made for the Sequences and Tropes.

Plain chant was at its best, till in the fourteenth century the Gregorian tradition began to decline; and a time arrived when the mass music deteriorated to the extent of occasional incorporation of the melodies of popular songs. It was into this fourteenth century, with so much and so developed and varied activity that the Yorkshireman, Richard Rolle, was born. No doubt architecture, glass-painting and plain-chant had each and all passed the zenith, but the great achievement remained to inspire and teach. Whatever else Rolle's era was or was not, it was a great period in the history of Mysticism.

S. Bonaventura had died in 1274; but in Germany Meister Eckhart was forty when Rolle was born: there were also there still alive, or but very recently dead, S. Gertrude the Great, S. Hildegarde, S. Mechtilde de Hackborn, Sœur Mechtilde de Magdeburg: while the great Dominican Tauler, and Suso were born before and died later than Rolle. In the Low Countries the greatest Mystic, save Thomas à Kempis, born there, Johann Ruysbroeck, was born seven years before Rolle, and long outlived him, dying at last at the great age of eighty-eight.

In Italy, Blessed Angela of Foligno died when Rolle was nine. Early in the third decade of the thirteenth century, the Dominicans and Franciscans had established themselves at Oxford: by the time of Rolle's birth in 1300, they were taking a large share in the teaching there,

and had Rolle chosen to stay on, had he not felt bound to make that particular Great Refusal, he might have risen to distinguished heights of learning : he might, like some members of both those Orders, have won high place in the Church, or have been employed by the King on great affairs of state. But his choice lay elsewhere.

Hidden irremediably, as it might have seemed, in the mist of six centuries' forgetfulness, Rolle has been, at length, recovered. As his pages lie open before us, it may dawn upon us that this forgotten man, the true Father of English Prose, stands the test of genius. His meaning was not for his own Age alone, but also for ours, and for all the many generations which slipped away between 1349 and 1923, and surely, for all to come, while our speech is used among men.

He deals with fundamental issues, and he deals with these quite sincerely as one who knows at first hand, not by any mere hearsay, but by an irrefutable experience. There were no half measures in Rolle's Life or Teaching. In his way of life, he had, at one choice and for ever, given up the things which to so many of us make life, what we, in our graceless way, describe by the grudging word tolerable. He had left home, comfort, kindred, friends ; he had relinquished all chance of that life of scholarly learning which his great gifts would have made so possible, so delightful.

For such an uncomplicated a nature, the surrender of these natural ties and creature comforts may not have

been excessively hard. Therefore, arising out of his quick sensitiveness—and we cannot forget his recurrent warnings against those temptations which reach us, to borrow a phrase from the *Ancren Riwle*, through the " windows " of our " five wits "—there was laid up for him a subtle trial. While he asked for no honour, for no honours, from his fellow-men, he always seems to have suffered, with quivering acuteness, under those unjust attacks, those false and often blundering charges which touch and wound a man's personal honour. Here was a snare, amply and constantly provided in his way into which he not seldom fell. He was without doubt of quick temper, and backbiting, which he often mentions, cut him to the quick.

In the region of worldly employment and advancement, the apparent success or failure of most of us is more or less at the mercy of our fellow creatures. By fair means or foul they can let us sail happily into port or bring us to a sort of shipwreck. Besides, the mere clash of temperaments, exacerbated in the stress of affairs, is often sufficient, without definite illwill, to bring about more than enough trouble and ferment.

More piercing still is the reflexion that unless we are very careful this disturbance of outward life, due in some measure to the activity of our fellows, may involve the damage, or even the ruin, of our spiritual peace. Of these facts, Richard Hermit was well aware. Yet save

for passing, superficial irritation about his neighbours' " backbitings," he remained unmoved : because he had learned, and, deep down in his heart, kept the truth that a man's saintliness is in the Hands of God, and in his own. Doubtless, the unkindness, injustice or mere blundering of his fellows can make a man's way harder than it might or need otherwise have been. Yet there, just there, lies fresh material out of which holiness can be made. The dross of human cruelty may and not seldom does enclose gold, to be extracted by pain and toil. To add to his brother's difficulties is within anyone's power ; to order his brother's use of or profit from those difficulties, fortunately lies for ever outside it.

Rolle was an extraordinarily human person : a man need but read his little discourse *On Prayer* to see that. He was, further, very sharp-eyed ; and his terse sayings seem to add a still keener edge to all which he saw. If there be a writer who diagnoses an evil more penetratingly, or more convincingly suggests its remedy, I do not know who it is. He has, to the " nth," the English knack of hitting a nail right on the head.

Moreover, so alert of intelligence had God made him, that he seemed abler than his brethren to seize, with a swiftness they often could neither grasp nor follow, the true point of a matter : he saw further into, further beyond the darkness of the particular difficulty than they could. Thus, while the slower-witted lumbered along, in their heavy way, to the goal which was his in one stride,

Richard literally shifted from one foot to another, as he stood on the thorns of impatience. In his teaching he is uncompromising. There, we find insistence on the elementary principles of spiritual life: he emphasises the vital necessity of hard, incessant self-purging, stern bridling of the "five wits;" neglect of all desire for honours or commendation; and he makes a very gallant effort to attain emotional imperviousness to human blame. After many struggles, or as the fruit of one supreme effort, there must for us all, soon or late, be a total surrender of the whole man, body, mind, spirit and will; a sheer and complete self-abnegation. Self, to every mystic, is the first and last enemy. We may well recall that vivid startling contrast of Fr. Augustine Baker: "the difference between heaven and hell is, that hell is full of nothing but self-love and propriety[1]; whereas, there is not the least degree of either in heaven;" a sentence so clear that the densest of us begins to understand what self-surrender involves, and what Heaven must be like.

Rolle was not a priest nor a monk; he had no "Superior," save, like any other Christian, the lawful authority of the Church. He was a dedicated layman, a wandering hermit, living on other men's charity, such as it might show itself to be. Layman as he was, he directed souls: the unnamed Nun of Yeddingham to and for whom the exquisite *Ego dormio* was put together;

[1] Fr. Baker uses the word "propriety" in the sense of care and provision for one's self, and for one's pleasures and desires.

or the " Sister of Hampole " for whom he wrote *The Commandment of Love to God;* and Margaret to whom he addressed *The Form of Perfect Living*. And we ourselves, if we will listen, may, after all these generations, find in this plain, illuminated, consecrated Yorkshireman a director who will not lead the weakest or the most unlearned astray. In his simplicity, his sincerity, his direct going to the point, Rolle's efficacy lies.

As he carries us out of the twentieth back into the English fourteenth century the atmospheric change makes us catch our breath. This definiteness, this confident exhortation :—" As soon as thine heart is touched with Heaven's sweetness, the mirth of this world will little delight thee : and when thou dost feel joy in the love of Christ, thou wilt detest the joy and comfort of earthly games. For all the melody, all the riches, all the delights that all the men in this world can ordain or think, seems, and is, nothing but annoyance and wrath to a man's heart that is verily burning in the love of God, because he has the mirth and melody of Angels' songs, as thou wittest well "—this is no mere effluence of a dominant human personality ; it has no touch of that strange assurance, self-assertion, careless self-complacence with which our own era seems to abound and over-abound. Rolle is a prophet in the right sense of the word, seeing into Everlasting Things by a Grace given to him. Excogitation is not the gift he brings, but

Tidings from the vast.

It is very important to remember that he was a contemplative, and further that contemplation has a definite work to accomplish. What that work is may be discussed when we have once more realised what was hinted before, that the golden thread running through all the most exalted levels of mysticism is whole-hearted, complete self-surrender. It may be conveyed as by Thomas à Kempis in a short sharp warning, " Give all for All." Or it may be hinted at in Louis Lallemant's searching analysis of human hesitation:—" Borne down by our own self-love, blinded by our ignorance, held back by lying fears, we dare not take the leap ; and for fear of being miserable, we stay miserable all our lives long. . . . . We need but give up, once for all, all our interests, all our pleasures, all our plans, all our desires, and depend henceforth on God's good pleasure, and resign ourselves wholly into His hands."

Those of us who are easy-going, or definitely self-indulgent, or, perhaps a little better than that, ready to do something but still shrinking from the unfathomed pain of entire self-surrender, all of us, at whatever stage of selfish imperfection, are faced by the staring fact that all the saints, all the mystics are at one here. One and all insist on the gift of self without reserve. We have already found it in Rolle the Yorkshireman, in the Dutch Thomas à Kempis, in Louis Lallemant who was born in the Province of Champagne : let the great Spaniard, S. Teresa, tell us again with all the force of her terse simplicity—

Bestow long life, or straightway bid me die,
Let health be mine, or pain and sickness send,
With honour or dishonour; be my path
Beset by War, or peaceful till the end.
My strength or weakness be as Thou shalt choose,
For naught Thou askest shall I e'er refuse,—
I only wish what Thou wilt have of me.

Assign me riches, keep in poverty,
And let me cherished or neglected dwell,
In joy or mourning as Thou wilt, upraised
To highest heaven, or hurled down to hell.
Whether the sky be bright, from cloudlets free,
It matters not—I leave the choice to Thee,
What lot O Lord, wilt Thou decide for me?

These are not the unthought-out words of the heedless and inexperienced. S. Teresa had spent years racked with physical pain: had suffered severely from the reproofs and requirements of Confessors who failed to grasp her circumstances, powers or needs. She was, often too for her best and wisest actions, held up to public scorn and reprobation, thwarted and stopped in her noblest efforts. Yet, quietly and comprehensively, she set down here the essentials on the path to sanctity.

"Which of you, intending to build," our Lord asked, "sitteth not down first and counteth the cost?" Well! there it is, that "cost" as it appeared to S. Teresa. Small wonder that the Abbé Bremond once wrote:—"When we have met one of these extraordinary people to whom the supernatural world seems more real than the other, we are never the same again."

Let no one imagine that this demand for self-surrender is arbitrary. It was a countryman of Rolle, who, in a later age, explained the reasonable necessity for the contemplative's utter self-giving. What was implicit in the simpler Rolle became explicit in the more complicated Augustine Baker. He insists " on inner prayer " as the vital preliminary to the total eradication of our " corrupt nature . . . . so subtle to insinuate her own interests." He declares that those " who do not pursue internal prayer can only so far mortify their passions that they break not forth into outward expressions or actions. But the evil root remains still alive, causing inward disorders very displeasing to God."

How painfully well some of us know that half broken-in state of the self, which just avoids external explosions but remains within in a condition of intolerable combustion and disorder.

Fr. Baker, with that relentless spirit of pursuit which tracks down an evil to its last lair, with that lucidity which holds it, however horrid, up to view in utmost clarity of light, sets forth the essential distinction between the " active " man's method and the contemplative's. The former " endeavour to mortify their inordinate affections by combating them purposely and directly." As he indicates, this method fails as a rule. The contemplatives, on the other hand, " do indirectly yet far more efficaciously mortify their passions by transcending them, that is by elevating and uniting their spirit to God with the help of

pure intellectual actuations, by this means forgetting and drowning both their sensual desires, yea all created things . . . . . they do not turn themselves towards the object, to the end to resist and contradict it, but by a vigorous act of resignation and love they convert their spirits unto God, scorning even to cast a regard or glance upon creatures that would allure their affections from God."

Elsewhere he writes that the perfect overcome themselves and their faults " by a universal transcending of all created things, by means of an elevation of spirit and drowning it in God."

In many passages in *Ego dormio*, if in simpler words, Rolle expounds this method : nor can we forget his vivid words in *The Form of Perfect Living* :—" Afterwards, when they have suffered many temptations . . . . He makes them gather up their hearts to them and fasten it only in Him . . . . . and afterwards they are contemplative men. For contemplation is a sight, and they see into Heaven with their ghostly eye . . . . . For Him they sought, Him they coveted, and Him they loved with all their might."

Rolle's was a simpler nature than Fr. Baker's, he lived a freer life too, and in more primitive surroundings : none the less underneath his practice, based in all probability less on reasoned experience than on swiftest intuition, lay this conviction which Fr. Baker presents so persuasively.

It is the direction of the whole man to God which makes final self-surrender possible : the predominating element in this direction is the burning love which flies straight and swiftly to its goal ; which avoids the " direct combat " because it has left the enemy by the way, and by its quick passage has passed into another region beyond the reach of hostile touch.

Self-surrender then is not an arbitrary matter : it is response to a divine demand. Also, it is a possibility, since God never asks from man what he cannot do, and the demand is clear enough in the Gospels :—" If any man will come after Me, let him deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow Me ; " that is follow Him Who all His earthly life long " emptied Himself," and in the supreme crisis prayed " O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from Me ; nevertheless, not as I will, but as Thou wilt."

Richard Rolle writes again and again of self-surrender. Though he knows it is necessary and therefore possible, few perhaps knew better than he its difficulty. In his treatise on *The Commandment of Love to God*, one of his Minor Writings it is true, but extraordinarily comprehensive, and penetrating too in its combination of experience and exhortation, he sets forth in a few lines the nature of self-giving which not only achieves the capacity to yield up just its own self and its own strictly personal concerns, but to give unreservedly into God's care its

best beloved; which last, to not a few, is the hardest task of all :—

> " Delight thyself so in Him that thy heart receive neither the world's joy not the world's sorrow, and dread not any anguish nor hurt that may befall thee bodily, nor any of thy friends : but commit everything in to God's will, and ever thank Him for all His sendings ; so that thou mayest have rest and savour in His love : for if thine heart be led either with fear of the world or by comfort of the world, thou art very far from the sweetness of Christ's love."

The power to do this is the sheer pure gift of God, on that point all the mystics agree ; a gift to those whose " disposition " makes it possible.

Those to whom it has not been given—for " the doom of God is truly privy," must fall back on the slower, less effectual ways, and wait in patience for this supreme gift of burning love, which flames straight up to its Source and Goal.

If the nature and purpose of this entire self-forgoing be misunderstood, some may be betrayed into irritation, others into the heresy of Quietism. Different temperaments will go these two different ways, if they first make the same mistake and agree in supposing that self-surrender ends in doing nothing.

Self-surrender must never be identified with what Abbot Sweeney, when he was clearing Fr. Baker from any share in the seventeenth century heresy of Quietism, called " annihilating the powers of the soul." S. Teresa did not give up desire, she substituted God's for her own :

I only wish what Thou wilt have of me.

No one with even a slight knowledge of her, of her life and work and ways could once think of her as a person living in an extinguished state of doing nothing. It is very well known, but that great and most true invocation of Crashaw may be recalled once more, in this connexion :

O thou undaunted daughter of desires !
By all thy dower of lights and fires ;
By all the eagle in thee, all the dove ;
By all thy lives and deaths of love ;
By thy large draughts of intellectual day,
And by thy thirsts of love more large than they ;
By all thy brim-fill'd bowls of fierce desire,
By thy last morning's draught of liquid fire ;

. . . . .

Leave nothing of myself in me.

No Quietist, not even that most winning of them all, Monseigneur de Cambrai, ever inspired such lines as these, where heat, light, inexhaustible energy burst the bonds of human speech. The change in S. Teresa was one of direction : there was not to be found in her any " annihilation of the soul's powers." She was still, as she so often signed herself at the end of her most human, witty, living letters, the " unworthy servant," serving all

and sundry, save herself, all the days of her life ; she was still Teresa the woman of unique personality, of wonderful intellect, about whom still clung some fragrance of the truly " great Lady." The only change was that in her deepest life, God, and not her own—once dominant, even exigent—self, had become the Centre.

This is equally true of Richard Hermit. Self-surrender never stayed his busy help of others : it never robbed him of one iota of that charm which drifts down to us through the centuries, till sometimes we can almost see him, and seeing him, know him instantly for himself and no other, sitting raptly as he described :—

> " Truly a very contemplative man is set towards the light unseen, with so great desire that oftentimes he is deemed by man as a fool or unwise ; and that is because his mind is inflamed from its seat with Christ's love. It utterly changes his bodily bearing, and his body departing also from earthly works it makes God's child as a man out of his mind."

Self-will (Fr. Baker's " propriety ") and individuality are not equivalents, nor identities. The Little Poor Man of Assisi, S. Ignatius Loyola, S. Teresa, Richard Hermit, Mother Julian, could never be confused together : in their self-surrender they were still themselves, not to be confused with each other, or with nobody in particular.

Nor, on the other hand, need the energetic, whether in mind, body or both, fear that if they can achieve self-surrender they will find themselves swallowed up in idleness for evermore. The contemplative life has its own form of activity. The word " busy " with its derivatives, occurs too often in Rolle's writings for any one to imagine that he could advocate any kind of sloth or enervating quiescence. " Therefore the Name, Jesus, is to be held busily in mind," he declares in the *Enconium*. In *Ego dormio*, whose very title tingles with activity, we find this exhortation : " ever till thou diest it behoves thee to be busy neither to stand nor to fall into ill-delight ; " and this other too ; " I will that thou beest never idle, but ever either speaking of God, or working some notable work, or thinking principally of Him." Once more to "the Sister of Hampole," to whom he adressed *The Commandment of Love to God*, he said that love itself is an activity :—" love is a will-full stirring of our thought." All that is in line with his short, well-known aphorism—" Love cannot be lazy." Similarly, the unknown Author of *the Cloud of Unknowing* stirs the surrendered soul to activity :—

> " Therefore, travail fast awhile, and beat upon this high cloud of unknowing, and rest afterward. . .
>
> But I pray thee wherein shall that travail be ? . . .
>
> Surely, this travail is all in treading down of the remembrance of all the creatures that ever God made,

and in holding of them under the cloud of forgetting named before. In this is all the travail; for this is man's travail, with help of grace. And the tother above—that is to say the stirring of love—that is the work of only God. And therefore, do on thy work, and surely I promise thee He shall not fail in His.

Do on then fast; let see how thou bearest thee. Seest thou not how He standeth and abideth thee? For shame! Travail fast but awhile, and thou shalt soon be eased of the greatness and of the hardness of this travail.

For though it be hard and strait in the beginning when thou hast no devotion; nevertheless yet after, when thou hast devotion, it shall be made full restful and full light unto thee that before was full hard."

The contemplative and the soul still "in the world" who attempts self-surrender, alike find that there is plenty of work, of the hardest kinds, still to be done; only it is no longer done in a fuss. Fever and fret will leave the man who at long last discovers that an end laid up with God is secure.

No doubt it would be abundantly worth the devil's while if he could persuade men that self-surrender leads to the sin of Quietism: but Calvary is against him; to say nothing of the consentient witness of the Saints.

However well and truly men understand its theory, the practice of entire self-surrender remains incalculably

hard. The Abbé Bremond has described a man's state of mind when he first encounters Père Lallemant's brief but exacting plea. " One is simply urged to ' give up once for all,' all one's interests, all one's desires : to ' make the complete sacrifice ; ' to ' reduce one's self to utter spiritual nudity.' At the outset one sees nothing of this self-annihilation but its almost infinite horror : one shrinks back from the awful gulf just about to yawn. One cannot picture the fulness of joy which must follow, if once one yields, gives one's self up, ' takes the leap.' "

Those who, forgetting that no sacrifice a man could make could ever be of moment compared with the tremendous sacrifice of God, still stumble at this doctrine of Perfect Love demanding such painful self abnegation, should not forget this closing sentence of Abbé Bremond, " Pain is not for pain's sake, nor is it the end."

An English Poet who knew and trod long and well the grey ways of dolour clothed this truth in immortal words :—

> All which I took from thee I did but take
> Not for thy harms,
> But just that thou mightst seek it in My arms.
> All which thy child's mistake
> Fancies as lost, I have stored for thee at home.
> Rise, clasp My hand and come !

When the secret of all the saints, this self-surrender, this " transcending of all created things," which in its absoluteness is the crown of mystical life, is once grasped

in theory, still before it can be attained through persistent practice, much remains to be done and learned. In a matter of prime importance to the spiritual life when he dwells on the priceless value of silence, Rolle again anticipates Fr. Baker.

Those who "will love God perfectly" Rolle warns that they must be "of little speech;" and that then having thus deliberately chosen silence, they must occupy it "with good thoughts." He declares, with the North country's directness of statement that "vain speech and ill words are the sign of a vain heart, and of evil that is without the grace of God."

It is plain that his injunctions to silence are primarily directed to the suppression of idle chattering and actually malicious talk. He is not, first and foremost, aiming at that silence which prepares for the coming of God's message to the waiting soul; it is not the quiet of contemplation he is enjoining; we are further back on the mystical path than that. Rather his desire, at this stage, is to secure a man against the positive sins of slander and expressed ill-will; of a "blabbering" tongue, as the fourteenth century onomatopoetically styled it.

As usual, when we turn to Fr. Baker we find him entering into minute details, but the substance is the same:—"Silence, which is one of the most profitable mortifications in a spiritual life, preventing a world of inconceivably pernicious damages which the spirit of

devotion and recollection receives by the superfluity and intemperance of the tongue : the ordinary subject of unnecessary conversations being murmurings, detraction, at least vain and distractive disputes, professions of friendships, news, etc."

When Fr. Baker moves on to discuss the forms of religious recreation, he finds some difficulty in discovering or recommending any which are safe, since most of us sin if we are allowed to talk; so true are Thomas à Kempis' poignant words :—" Oftentimes I could wish that I had been silent and had not been among men."

This difficulty is more pressing, more practical than all of us realise ; not only in religious houses, but in secular institutions where men, or women, as in schools and colleges, are more or less forced to live in fairly close contact, not only in their homes, but in ordinary society many persons sin with their tongues more from vacuity than from malice. Unless people make it their business to talk about matters of real interest—and there is always the difficulty of that section who neither know nor care for such—they are bound to drift into talk about their neighbours. Recreation-time, devoted to the exercise of the tongue, is whether to ' religious ' or ' secular ' a testing time. Yet, as Fr. Baker insists, some recreation is profitable, " yea, at due times necessary."

In his inability to provide otherwise, he recalls " the story of S. John the Evangelist, the first Doctor and example of contemplation, whose custom was to recreate

himself with a tame dove ; for which, being censured by a hunter that passed by as for an action that was beneath his gravity, and not becoming one that professed a continual conversation with God, he defended himself to the conviction of the reprover by showing that as a bow, if it be always bent, would lose its force, so the mind would likewise become incapable of Divine thoughts, if no relaxation were allowed it."

There is that other case too, of the Director, in the *Ancren Riwle*, who forbade the Anchoresses in his charge to burden themselves with mundane goods, telling them they should keep no cattle at all, " but a cat one."

Some of us, thinking on these things perceive the hallowing of the great gift to us of our pet animals. With them, the bow can be unbent. They are infinitely sympathetic, extraordinarily consoling, and not least because with their manifest understanding of our plight, they offer no tiresome advice, and, best of all, never go away and make mischief out of our unwise remarks and confidences, which we gave them, not out of any malice, but sheerly for our own relief. However hard it may sometimes seem and be to guide common conversation away from all evil, and with whatever vehemence the mystics may bid us renounce everything, even when Rolle tells us how God will have His lovers " gather up their hearts to them and fasten it only in Him," still that is not " the conclusion of the whole matter." Man, while he is in this world, remains man, and so the true Mystic knows

that God remembers we " are but dust," and provides for us. Richard Hermit himself, stripped of the world's most ordinary gifts, dedicated to a wandering life of poverty and self-abnegation neither forgot nor banned holy friendship :—Holy friendship, therefore, that has medicine for all wretchedness is not to be despised. From God it truly is that amid the wretchedness of this exile we be comforted with the counsel and help of friends, until we come to Him. Where we shall all be taught of God, and sit in eternal seats, and we shall be glad without end in Him that we have loved, and in Whom and by Whom we have friends.

From this friendship I can except no man, be he never so holy, but he needs it ; unless there be any such to whom not man but angels serve."

This is worth emphasis if only that it may drive home the fact that those, who come to the writings of the Mystics should, unless they are careless about falling into mistakes and one-sidedness, always bear in mind the injunction in the Prologue to the *Cloud of Unknowing* :—

> " over this I charge thee and I beseech thee by the authority of charity, that if any such shall read it, write it, or speak it, or else hear it be read or spoken, that thou charge him as I do thee, for to take him time to read it, speak it, write it, or hear it, all over. For peradventure there is some matter therein in the beginning, or in the middle, the which is hanging and

> not fully declared where it standeth : and if it be not there, it is soon after, or in the end : wherefore, if a man saw one matter and not another, peradventure he might lightly be led into error ; and therefore, in eschewing of this error, both in thyself and in all other, I pray thee for charity do as I say thee."

At the best, as experience shews, it is not quite easy for all of us to understand mystical teaching rightly. Therefore, this advice to read widely and thoroughly before jumping to conclusions, points to one way of safety. Rolle's characteristic " good sense," his plain even blunt counsels, explanations, and solutions should attract those who have possibly an exaggerated but undoubtedly real fear of emotionalism. It is neither here nor there that such people would often find it hard to say precisely what they mean by the word, nor that others might retort that their very fear is nothing but an emotion. They may be further reassured by the fact that he was singularly immune from those experiences which play some part in the lives of not a few mystics—visions, trances, stigmata, etc. It is true that there is the one instance :—

> " I was sitting forsooth in a chapel, and whiles I was mickle delighted with sweetness of prayer or meditation, suddenly I felt within me a merry and unknown heat . . . . whiles also, I took heed praying to heaven with my whole desire, suddenly, I wot not in what manner, I felt in me the noise of song."

These passages from the fifteenth chapter of *The Fire of Love* are elucidated in Rolle's *Preface* to it :—

> " as it were if thy finger were put into fire it should be clad with sensible burning, so, as beforesaid, the soul set afire with love, truly feels most very heat."

These two stages, heat and song, precede the highest state—sweetness. In *The Form of Perfect Living* Rolle writes :—

> " The third degree is highest and most wondrous to win. That is called singular for it has no fear. *Singular* love is when all comfort and solace is closed out of thine heart, but of Jesus Christ alone. Other joy it delights not in. For the sweetness of Him in this degree is so comforting, and lasting in His love, so burning and gladdening, that he or she who is in this degree can as well feel the fire of love burning in their soul, as thou canst feel thy finger burn if thou puttest it in the fire. But that fire, if it be hot, is so delectable and so wonderful, that I cannot tell it."

Rolle is only using an analogy from stimulated senses in his effort to convey something of a spiritual condition which, after all, is not identical with the visions and trances which are frequent in the Lives of the Saints. Moreover, the present-day interest in psychical phenomena, in the cult of the occult, has found it convenient to forget the Church's constantly repeated reminder that

these experiences are no essential part of mysticism, and may be deceptions practised by malign powers. We should remember that Rolle lived long before Fr. Augustine Baker and Gertrude More, S. Teresa, S. John of the Cross and still longer before Père Lallemant. Not all of those were subject to supernormal experiences of the visionary kind. So far as we know, he was not a frequent student of other men's writings, save possibly of S. Bonaventura's and S. Edmund's. He was naturally a liberty-loving, very individual Englishman. While he insisted on the Authority of the Church, and not least on its necessity for those who sought peculiar sanctity,—" to the children of unity hidden mysteries are open. Wherefore, soothly, springs the frowardness of heretics, but from an untaught and inordinate mind, which is blinded by desire of its own excellence? . . . . Stand therefore in thy degree "—yet he was a solitary: left largely to himself and stripped of wordly things, he exemplifies singularly that phrase of Thomas à Kempis, *nudus nudum Jesum sequi*. If he set less store by Western *doing* than by Eastern *being*, if because he was not fussily active we say, in our careless way, that he did little, yet he was a great lover :—" Truly not he that does great and many things is great; but he that loves God mickle is great, and loved of God."

In what is that shewn more clearly than in his insisttence on the need for cleansing the inner life by stern purification, mortification, by relentless cultivation of

good where evil has been torn out with pain and tears ?— " Forsooth turned to Christ with all my heart, I am tied first by true penance." How characteristic it is that his nearest approach to trance or vision, should be heat and song *within* him.

All this leaves little chance for the Psycho-Analysts, who, however much they may differ among themselves, very generally agree in believing that mystical visions and the like can be disposed of with the rather conveniently vague word neurotic. Nor does he offer much more vantage ground to the Psycho-Therapeutists, who rely on " suggestion " as their remedy. There does not seem to be much curative suggestion possible for the man who says :—

> " I went about by covetousness of riches and I found not Jesus, I ran by the wantonness of the flesh and I found not Jesus. I sat in companies of worldly mirth and I found not Jesus. In all of them I sought Jesus, but I found Him not, for He let me know by His grace that He is not found in the land of softly living. Therefore, I turned by another way, and I ran about by poverty and I found Jesus . . . . I went by suffering of sharpness ; and I found Jesus . . . . I sat by my lone, fleeing the vanity of the world and I found Jesus . . . . I ran by pain and penance, and I found Jesus."

Suggestion can do little with the person to whom that passage is simple fact. If he offers small scope for the operations of these Psychologists, Social Reformers of the more busy sort may find him no more satisfactory. For he is so determined to take men one by one; he has no faith in "mass methods," he will win them as individuals. It seems at times so much easier to "have a Committee and get to work," or to "call a public meeting," than to seek out the hundredth soul or woolly head, lost on the mountains of ignorance, wilfulness, folly or indifference. But some, when they have sat on enough committees and seen the resultlessness of enough public meetings, may come at last to feel that the mountainous plan if the longer way round is the shortest way Home. Anyhow Rolle did; and his success was not only due to the fact that he is so direct that he captures his man, so plain in his teaching that "the wayfaring man though a fool cannot err therein." Very likely men may refuse to follow him, for his is an "asperous way." But the refusal will be made not because they cannot understand, but because they understand only too well.

Rolle is extraordinarily definite, relentlessly sweeping away sentimentalities, self-pityings, pious self-deceptions. At the back of him stood the *Ecclesia docens;* that is true to whatever degree he sometimes seems to be a freelance. Let us recall again the urgent plea of the *Author of the Cloud of Unknowing*, "charge him . . . . for to take him time to read it, speak it, write it, or hear it all over."

The seventh Chapter of the *Fire of Love* is an excellent instance of Rolle's close wedding together of faith and practice. He insists first on the necessity of credal doctrine, and of theological accuracy and precision. He opens the chapter with words which show how much importance he attached to doctrine rightly expressed :— " If any, erring, would say, in the Trinity are three Essences (kinds) because they say three Persons, why should they not also say three Gods ; since to God it is all one to be God and to be His Essence."

With careful precision he sets forth the doctrine of the Trinity. Then by an easy transition he brings us from theological truth to the key of every " practising " life—charity :

> " Truly the everlasting Son of the Father is become Man in time, born of a maiden, that He might gain-buy man from the fiend's power. This is our Lord Jesus Christ : the which only be fastened in our minds, the which for us only was tied on the cross. Nothing truly is so sweet as to love Christ. And, therefore, ransack we not too mickle those things that we in this life may not conceive . . . . He forsooth that loves mickle is great, and he that loves least is least ; for after the greatness of the charity we have in us shall we be praised before God."

It is the order of the *Quicunque vult ;* first accurate, precise doctrine, so far as " we in this life may . . . . conceive," then " whoever shall have done good."

As a natural result of his carefulness for doctrinal teaching, Rolle knew well where was the seat of sin. He put it in its one only true place, in the *Will*. That can be seen clearly, and it is a striking example, in his teaching about riches. Whether or no he rendered S. Edmund's *Speculum*, the view is his. Sin, as he invariably declares, is in no material thing whatever : " things," in themselves are neither good nor bad. Therefore, whatever some thinkers now, or in other days, may seem to think, sin is not inherent in wealth. The sin, if there be one, lies in the use made of it, and in the heart's desire concerning it. How characteristic is Rolle's argument that those who, having no wealth, still love and long for it, are even more culpable in a way than those having and loving it. It seems as if he would bring us to realise that, in this matter, the most difficult " way " is not to suffer poverty either willingly or unwillingly, but to accept wealth without loving it excessively.

A great deal has been written lately about Mysticism ; but perhaps there are still many who have very hazy ideas about it. It is not the whole of religion. The Corporate Society, the reason and the understanding have their several and vital importance too. Further, Mysticism, that is the direct personal ascent to God, may have and has had its dangers, because every great and good thing includes a perilous element, and all people caring for great and good things must at times live dangerously. But though Mysticism is not the beginning,

middle and end of religion, it remains true that the individual, deliberate, open-eyed journey to God—whatever it may owe in an early stage and throughout its course to teaching and to reason, and whatever debt it owes and always must owe to Holy Church and the Sacraments is still the very heart of religion.

Baron von Hügel, in a much quoted passage, urged that a " mystical element " is essential to religion, which seems to imply that some mystical activity will be found, in some degree, in every true lover of God.

Dom Cuthbert Butler, in his *Western Mysticism*, argues that in recent times there has been a kind of " watering down " of the meaning of mysticism. He cites M. Joly's sentence—" Le Mysticisme, c'est l'amour de Dieu " as a case in point.

The trouble with a definition is that it can very rarely be complete. Taken by itself, M. Joly's phrase is, of course, inadequate. But in the same chapter he enlarged and elaborated it :—" True mysticism "—he went on to say, " otherwise love to God—is then the first step towards sanctity, and it is an obviously essential step. But it is only a first step, opening the way to a long thorny career, in which the spirit's life, and what we call the active life, are required to lavish their efforts, to multiply their actions quite as much as the life of the heart is . . . . The mystic . . . . is a man whose entire life is wrapped up in, and saturated with, the love of God." This amplification of his short startling sentence brings his theory

to a point where it does not clash with Dom Butler's view of Mysticism, even according to the strict sense in which he claims to use this much abused word, *i.e.*, with " The perfectly clear, traditional historical meaning, handed down in the Christian Church throughout the centuries, not subject to confusion of thought until recent times." The word which Abbot Butler regards as properly applying is not Mysticism but " Contemplation." He adds, " the claim consistently and unequivocally made by the whole line of great mystics, found perhaps its simplest and most arresting expression in these words of S. Augustine :—'My mind in the flash of a trembling glance came to Absolute Being—That which Is.' "

Dom Butler will only be misunderstood by those who fail to realise that Contemplation is a process as well as a result. He makes it perfectly clear that " it is the constant teaching of the great mystics that there can be no progress in prayer without mortification ; no contemplation without self-denial and self discipline seriously undertaken; no real mysticism without asceticism, in its full sense of spiritual training." We must remember too that people differ immeasurably. What leagues apart in some ways are a S. Augustine and a Richard Rolle. Yet as Fénelon said, " Il n'y pas de distance en Dieu, tout ce qui est un en Lui se touche."

So perhaps it is justifiable to claim that even if the word Mysticism be used in the strictest sense of Contemplation—as a process and a result—there is in every

one, who has passed beyond the conventionalism of an accepted, but unanalysed, unconsidered religiousness, who has even once caught the gleaming of the far-off vision, some mystical activity pushing him on evermore to seek and to follow; not now because some one else has told him that he should, but because love forces him on, the love which can burn in a simple unlettered soul, and fire the learned man, whose knowledge, won by "discursive" means, is, to him, but dust in the balance compared to that which is intuitive, which can brighten the grey paths of common place lives, and, though this seems sometimes to be strangely overlooked, which inspires the prophetic and the apocalyptic.

Mysticism is no mere day-dreaming of the feeble-minded, no theory-spinning of the intellectually dowered, no fashion of an era ever ready to hear "some new thing," but it is the long arduous, painful climb, crowned at last by vision, not to be described or told: the climb persistently, humbly, faithfully pursued by any and every lover of God who having once experienced that "flash of a trembling glance," has not been "disobedient to the heavenly vision." Rolle once wrote of the duty of giving material help to those less well-off than ourselves, "He that is our Lord's servant trusts in our Lord." Below the "heat, song and sweetness" of his mystical life lay, in every sphere material and intangible, that abiding fact.

The object of making this book was two-fold: first to present together the best of Rolle's shorter writings;

and secondly to fill up a gap which remained in modern renderings of them. Whether or no, Middle English is as difficult as the general reader thinks, he will not take the trouble to read it; and if he would it is expensive and not quite easy to procure.

Monsignor Benson in his *Little Book of the Love of Jesus* essayed the hard task of modernising some of Rolle's poems, with a few prose extracts. Miss Comper made her valuable versions of *The Fire of Love* and *The Mending of Life*. In 1910, I modernised *The Form of Perfect Living*, *Our Daily Work* and two or three shorter tracts: modernised them that is to say in language. With all these, and with the pieces which follow here, no one need remain ignorant now of the best of Rolle's imperishable gift to his countrymen.

Dr. Horstman once described him as "all feeling, enthusiasm, inspiration, unrestrained by reasoning or any exterior rule." The last clause some may find exaggerated. With his impetuous love Rolle combined incomparable simplicity and humorous common sense. His particular quality of driving home the most vital truths of revelation and holy experience so that no one can miss his meaning, makes a large part of his attraction for busy, practical, sincere English men and women.

It may indeed be said of him as, ages ago, it was said of Socrates, that men go away from listening to him with the point of what he said sticking in their minds, so that they cannot get rid of it.

GERALDINE E. HODGSON.

Passion-Tide, 1923.

Encomium Nominis Jesu.[1]

PRAISE OF THE NAME OF JESUS.

[Richard Hermit, upon the verse *Oleum effusum nomen tuum* (" Thy Name is oil poured forth ") in Canticles 1. 3. MS. Thornton.]

OLEUM effusum nomen tuum. That is, in English, " Oil outpoured is Thy Name." The Name of Jesus comes into the world, and as soon it smells as oil outpoured. Oil ! that is taken for the everlasting salvation which is hoped-for. Truly " Jesus " is as much as to mean, saviour or healthful. Therefore, what means " Oil outpoured is Thy Name," save " Jesus is Thy Name ? " This Name is oil out-poured, because Jesus, the Word of God, has taken man's nature. Jesus ! Thou fulfillest indeed what Thou art called in name ; soothly one says—Thou, Whom we call Saviour. Therefore, Jesus is Thy Name.

Ah ! that wonderful Name ! Ah ! that delectable Name ! This is the Name that is above all names, Name altogether highest, without which no man hopes for health. This Name is sweet and joyful, giving truthful comfort into man's heart. Soothly, the Name of Jesus is, in my mind, a joyous song, in mine ear a heavenly sound, in my mouth honey-full sweetness. Therefore, it is no wonder if I love that Name, which gives me comfort in

[1] The present rendering is from the Harl. M.S. 1022. This Middle English version, as well as that in the Thornton MS., was made from the Latin Original. It is not known for certain whether or no Rolle translated it himself.

every anguish. I cannot pray, I cannot meditate but in sounding the Name Jesus. I savour no joy that is unmingled with Jesus. Wheresoever I be, wheresoever I sit, whatsoever I do, the remembrance of the Name of Jesus departs not from my mind. I have set it as a token upon my heart, as a token upon mine arm; for "love is as strong as death." As death slays all, so love overcomes all. Everlasting love has overcome me, not to slay but to quicken me. But it has wounded me in order to heal me; it has struck through my heart that it may be the more healthfully healed; and now, overcome, I yield. Unless I live for joy, very soon I must die, for I, in this feeble flesh, cannot suffice to bear so flowing a sweetness of so great majesty. There wanders into my mind deliciousest sweetness, and ever it falls into inebriation; the flesh cannot fail in its virtue awhile the soul in such joy is ravished to joy. But wherefore cometh such joy to me but for Jesus? The Name of Jesus has taught me to sing, and has lightened my mind with the heat of uncreated light.

Therefore I sigh and cry; who shall shew to the beloved Jesus that I languish for love? My flesh has failed, and my heart has melted into love, in yearning after Jesus. The whole heart fixed in yearning after Jesus is turned into Fire of Love, and with the sweetness of the Godhead is it fully filled. Therefore, O good Jesus, have mercy on this wretch, shew Thyself to this languishing one, be leech to this wounded one. If Thou

comest, I am whole : I do not feel sick, only languishing for Thy love. Seeking Jesus Whom it loves, with Whose love it is seized, Whom alone it covets, let my soul seize on Thee.

Soothly the mind touched with sovereign sweetness, sighs to wax hot in the Maker's love, while it strives to hold busily within it the sweetest Name of Jesus.

Truly, there rises thence a great love, and whatever thing it truly touches it ravishes it utterly to it. It inflames affection, and binds thought ; and draws all men to its service.

Soothly Jesus, desirable is Thy Name, lovable and comfortable. None other so sweet song may be heard, none other so sweet joy be conceived ; none other so delectable solace may be had in mind.

Therefore, whosoever thou beest that makest thyself ready for the love of God, if thou wilt neither be deceived nor deceive, if thou wilt be wise and not unwise, if thou wilt stand and not fall, remember busily to hold the Name of Jesus in thy mind. Thine enemy shall fall, and thou shalt stand : thine enemy shall be made weak and thou shalt be made strong : and if thou wilt loyally do this, thou shalt be, far from fear, a glorious and lovable overcomer. Therefore, seek the Name of Jesus, hold it, and forget it not. Soothly no other thing so quenches

hell flames, destroys all ill thoughts, puts out venomous affections, does away with curious and vain affections from us.

Also this Name Jesus, loyally held in mind, drags up vices by the roots, plants virtues, sows charity, pours in the savour of heavenly things, drains away discord, reforms peace, gives everlasting rest, utterly does away the grievousness of fleshly desires, turns all earthly things worthless, and fills His lovers with ghostly joy. So that it may well be said :—*Et gloriabuntur omnes qui diligunt nomen tuum, quoniam tu benedices justo ;* that is " All that love Thy Name shall rejoice ; for the righteous Thou shalt bless."

For the righteous has deserved to be blessed if he have truly loved the Name of Jesus. Therefore, what can be wanting to him who incessantly desires to love the Name of Jesus ? Soothly, he loves and he yearns to love ; for we have known that the love of God so is that in so far as we love more, the more we long to love ; wherefore it is said : *Qui me edunt adhuc esuriunt, et qui me bibunt adhuc siciunt ;* that is " they that eat Me hunger still, and they that drink Me still thirst." Therefore the Name of Jesus and the love of it, is in itself delectable and to be coveted.

Therefore joy shall not be wanting to him who busily desires to love Him " Whom the Angels yearn to behold." The Angels ever see, and ever yearn to see, and they are so filled that their filling does not quench

desire : and they so desire, that their desire does not do away with their filling.

This is full Joy, this is unending Joy, this is glorious Joy, wherewith we being filled, use lastingly without pain, and if we use it we shall be filled for ever without any loss. Therefore, Jesus, all shall rejoice that love Thy Name. Soothly now shall they rejoice for the inpouring of grace, and in time to come for the sight of Joy : and, therefore, shall they rejoice because they love Thy Name. Soothly were they not loved, they could not rejoice. And they that love more shall rejoice more; for why, Joy comes of love. Therefore, he who loves not shall be evermore without Joy. Therefore, many wretches of the world expecting to rejoice with Christ, shall sorrow endlessly because they loved not the Name of Jesus. " Whatsoever ye do, if ye give all that ye have unto the needy, except ye love the Name of Jesus, ye travail in vain." Alonely they may rejoice in Jesus, who love Him in this life : and they who fill themselves with vices and venomous delights, no fear but they are put out of Joy. So, let all men know that the Name of Jesus is healthful, fruitful and glorious. Therefore, who shall have health who loves it not ? Who shall bear fruit before Christ who has not the flower ? and he shall not see Joy, who, rejoicing, loved not the Name of Jesus. The wicked shall be done away so that he sees not the joy of God. Truly, the righteous seek joy and life and they find it in Jesus, whom they loved.

I went about by covetousness of riches, and I found not Jesus. I ran by the wantonness of the flesh, and I found not Jesus. I sat in companies of worldly mirth and I found not Jesus. In all of them I sought Jesus, but I found Him not; for He let me know by His grace that He is not found in the land of softly living. Therefore, I turned by another way, and I ran about by poverty and I found Jesus, poorly born into the world, laid in a crib, lapped in cloths. I went by suffering of sharpness; and I found Jesus weary in the way, tormented with hunger, thirst and cold, filled with reproofs and blame. I sat by my lone, fleeing the vanity of the world, and I found Jesus, in the desert, fasting, in the Mount, praying alone. I ran by pain and penance, and I found Jesus, bound, scourged, given gall to drink, nailed to the cross (hanging on the Cross) and dying on the Cross. Therefore, Jesus is not found in riches but in poverty, not in delights but in penance, not in wanton joying but in bitter weeping, not among many but in loneliness.

Soothly, an evil man finds not Jesus, for where He is he seeks Him not. He forces himself to seek Jesus in the joy of the world, where never shall He be found. Soothly therefore, the Name of Jesus is helpful, and needs must be loved by all who covet salvation. He well covets his own salvation who busily keeps within him the Name of Jesus. Soothly, I have no wonder that he, who puts not the Name of Jesus lastingly in his mind, falls when tempted. Certainly, only he may choose to live who has chosen the Name of Jesus for his special own; for no

wicked spirit can trouble when Jesus is much in mind and named by the mouth.

Therefore, the Name of Jesus is to be held busily in mind.

When I had taken my singular purpose, and left the secular habit, and I began to serve God more than man, it fell on a night, as I lay in my rest, in the beginning of my conversion, there appeared to me a full fair young woman, the which I had seen before, and she loved me not a little in good love. And when I had beholden her, and I wondered why she came so, in the night, in the wilderness, suddenly, without more speech she laid herself beside me. And when I felt her there, I feared lest she should draw me to evil, and said, I would rise up and bless us in the Name of The Holy Trinity. And she constrained me so stalwartly that I had no mouth to speak, nor no hand to stir; and when I saw that, I perceived well that there was no woman, but the devil in the shape of a woman. Therefore, I turned me to God, and with my mind I said; " Ah Jesus, how precious is Thy Blood," making the Cross with my finger upon my breast; and at once she waxed weak, and suddenly, all was away; and I thanked God, who delivered me. And soothly, from that time forth, I forced myself to love Jesus; and ever the more I increased in the love of Jesus, the sweeter I found it; and from that day it never went from my mind.

Therefore, blessed be the Name of Jesus in the world of worlds. Amen.

ON THE NAME OF JESUS[1]

IF thou wilt be well with God, and have grace to rule thy life right and come to the joy of love; fasten this Name of Jesus so fast in thine heart that it can never come out of thy thought. And when thou speakest to Him, saying, through habit, Jesus! it shall be in thine ear joy, in thy mouth honey, in thy heart melody; for all shall think joy to hear that Name named, sweetness to speak it, mirth and song to think it. If thou thinkest on Jesus continually and holdest Him stably, it purges thy sin, and kindles thy heart; it clarifies thy soul, removes anger, and does away with slowness. It wounds in love, it fills full with charity; it chases the devil and quenches fear, it opens heaven and makes a contemplative man. Have Jesus in memory, for that puts all vices and phantoms far from the lover. If thou wilt not deceive nor be deceived: if thou wilt be wise and not unwise, think on this Name, Jesus, continually. It destroys all vices and vanities. It sows charity and virtues in the soul, and pours in the savour of heaven, and the fulness of God's grace into earth. Whosoever loves this Name, Jesus, without forgetting, dies in wonderful melody, and

[1] This short piece of prose comes from a fifteenth century collection [MS. Rawl C 285] which includes some of Walter Hilton's work, some of two less well-known contemporary mystics, and some of Richard Rolle—amongst it one of his finest, most characteristic writings—Meditation on the Passion—which will be found further on in this book. The present scrap is most probably Rolle's, and follows suitably on the *Encomium*.

is taken by angels and brought before Him Whom he loved. This Name Jesus is above all names, to which all knees kneel, of heaven and earth and hell.

Eat and drink, sleep and wake, speak and hold silence, pray and think, work, and all that thou dost do it in the Name of Jesus, bids S. Paul.

God bless you, and keep you and give you good perseverance, through the virtue of this joyful Name, Jesus. Amen.

AN EPISTLE ON SALVATION BY LOVE OF THE NAME OF JESUS.[1]

WIT thou well, dear friend, that though thou hadst never done sin with thy body, deadly nor venial, but only that which is called Original, because it was the first sin, which is the losing of thy righteousness in which thou wast made, thou shouldst never have been safe if our Lord Jesus Christ by His passion had not delivered thee and restored thee again.

And thou shalt wit that thou, be thou never so great a wretch, though thou hast done never so much sin; forsake thyself and all thy works good and ill, cry mercy, and only ask salvation, by the virtue of His precious Passion, meekly and sorrowfully, and without doubt thou shalt have it; and from this original, and from all other sin, thou shalt be safe. Yea, and thou shalt be as safe as an anchorite enclosed: and not only thou but all Christian men and women who believe in His Passion, and meek themselves, knowing their wretchedness, asking mercy and forgiveness and the fruit of His precious Passion, only yielding themselves to the Sacraments of Holy Church; though it be that they have been cumbered

[1] The Thornton MS., still preserved in the Library of Lincoln Cathedral, was written by Robert Thornton in the first half of the 14th Century, in the northern dialect, which Richard Rolle, as a Yorkshireman, always used. It contains a number of pieces bearing Rolle's name, and many which are unsigned. This Epistle on Salvation is one of the latter, but Mr Perry, who edited Rolle for the Early English Text Society, prints it as his.

in and with sin all their life-time and never had any feeling of ghostly savour, or sweetness, or ghostly knowledge of God, they shall, in this faith and in their goodwill be saved by the virtue of the precious Passion of our Lord Jesus Christ, and come to heaven's bliss.

See here the endless mercy of our Lord, how low He falls to thee and to me, and to all sinful caitiffs. Ask mercy and have it; thus said the prophet in the person of our Lord. *Omnis enym quicunque inuocauerit nomen domini saluus erit :* " Everyman, whatever he be, that calls on God's name "—that is to say asks salvation by Jesus and by His passion, " he shall be safe."

But this courtesy of our Lord, some men take and are thereby saved: and some, in trust of His mercy and His courtesy, live still in their sins, and ween that they can have it when they list; and then they may not, for they are taken or ever they know, and so they damn themselves.

But now thou sayest thou wonderest greatly if this be true, " on account of what I find written in some men's sayings. Some say, as I understand, that he who cannot love this blessed Name, Jesus, nor find nor feel in it ghostly joy and delectability with wonderful sweetness, here in this life, he shall be alien from the sovereign joy, and ghostly sweetness in the bliss of heaven, and never shall he come thereunto. Soothly, these words when I hear them or read them, astonish me and make me greatly

afraid; for I hope, as thou sayest, that many by the mercy of God shall be safe by keeping of His commandments, and by very repentance of their aforetime evil life, though they never felt ghostly sweetness nor inward savour in the Name of Jesus nor in the love of Jesus. And, therefore, I marvel the more that these say contrary hereto as it seems."

As for this, I may say as I think, that their saying, if it be well understood is true, nor is it contrary to what I have said. For this Name, Jesus, is nought else but to say in English Healer, or Health. Now, every man who lives in this wretched life is ghostly sick, for there is no man who lives without sin, which is ghostly sickness; as S. John says of himself and other perfect men thus: *Si dixerimus quia peccatum non habemus ipsi nos seducimus*, etc., "If we say that we have no sin, we beguile ourselves, and soothfastness is not in us;" and therefore, he may never feel nor come to the Joys of heaven until he first be made whole of his ghostly sickness. But this ghostly health may no man, with the use of reason, have, unless he desire it, and love it, and have delight therein in as much as he hopes to get it. Now, the Name of Jesus is nought else but this ghostly health. Wherefore it is truth that they say that there may be no man safe unless he love and like in the Name of Jesus, for there may be no man whole but if he love and desire ghostly health. For just as, if a man were bodily sick, there were no earthly thing so dear nor so needful to him nor so much to be desired by him

as bodily health—for though thou wouldest give him all the riches and honours of this world and not make him whole though thou couldest, thou shouldest please him not—just so is it to a man who is ghostly sick, and feels the pain of ghostly sickness : nothing is so dear, so needful, so much to be desired by him as his ghostly health ; and that is Jesus, without Whom all the Joys of heaven cannot pleasure him. And this is the reason, as I hope, that our Lord when He took human nature for our salvation, He would not be called by any name betokening His endless being, or His might, or His wisdom, or His righteousness, but only by that which was the cause of His coming and that was the salvation of man's soul, which salvation was most dear and most needful to man, and this Name, Jesus, betokens this salvation. Then by this it seems that there may no man be safe except he love Jesus, for there may no man be safe unless he love salvation, which love he may have who lives and dies in the lowest degree of charity. On another wise also, I may say that he who cannot love this blessed Name Jesus with ghostly mirth, nor enjoy it with heavenly melody here, in the bliss of heaven he shall never have nor feel that fulness of sovereign joy, which he, who in this life could by abundance of charity enjoy in Jesus, shall have and feel ; and so may their saying be understood. Nevertheless, he shall be safe and have full praise in God's right if, in this life, he be in the lowest degree of charity by keeping God's commandments.

For Christ says in the Gospel: *In domo patris mei mansiones multe sunt :* " In My Father's house are many separate dwellings." Some are for perfect souls, who, in this life were filled full of the Holy Ghost's grace, and sang praises to God, contemplating Him with wonderful sweetness and heavenly savour. These souls, because they had most charity, shall have highest reward in the bliss of heaven, for these are called God's darlings. Other souls who, in this life, are imperfect and are not disposed to the contemplation of God, nor had that fulness of charity as, in the beginning of Holy Church, apostles and martyrs had ; these shall have the lower reward in the bliss of heaven ; for these are called God's friends. Thus our Lord calls chosen souls in Holy Writ, saying thus : *Comedite amici, et inebriamini carissimi :* " My friends eat ye, and my darlings be ye drunken,"[1] As if our Lord said on this wise : " Ye that are My friends because ye kept My commandments, and set My love before love of the world, and loved Me more than any other earthly thing, ye shall be fed with ghostly food of the Bread of Life. But ye, who are My darlings, and not only kept my commandments, but also of your own free will fulfilled my counsels, and beyond that loved Me only, entirely

[1] All students of Rolle will appreciate the difficulty, mentioned by Miss Frances Comper, in a note on p. 244 of her Rendering of *The Fire of Love* and *The Mending of Life*, of tracing the source of his quotations. She says, " They often differ slightly from the Vulgate." In the case of one so different as this, the difference being essential to his meaning, it would be interesting to know which of her suggestions, missal, breviary, or a memory which betrayed him is nearest to the facts.

with all the powers of your soul, and burned in My love with ghostly delight as did, first of all, the Apostles and Martyrs and all others who should come, by the gift of Grace, to perfection, ye shall be made drunken with the freest wine in My cellar, that is the sovereign joy of love in the bliss of heaven."

To the which bliss may He bring us, Who bought us with His precious Passion, Jesus Christ, God's Son of Heaven. Amen.

De in-perfecta contricione.[1]

OF IMPERFECT CONTRITION.

RICHARD HERMIT rehearses a dreadful tale of imperfect contrition that a holy man Cesarius tells, by way of example. He says that a young man, a Canon at Paris, living unchastely and luxuriously, and full of many sins, lay sick unto death. He shrived him of his great sins, he hastened to amend himself, he received the Sacrament of the Altar and anointed himself, and so he died. Till his burial, all seemed well. After a few days, he appeared to one who was friendly with him in this life, and said that he was damned for this cause: "Though" quoth he, "I was shriven and hastened to do penance, to me true contrition was wanting, without which all other things avail nothing. Because, though I hastened to leave my folly, yet my conscience said that even if I left them I should still have delight in my old life; and to that my heart more held and bowed down, than it restrained me from all thoughts which I knew to be against God's will. And, therefore, I had no stable purpose in good, no perfect contrition. Wherefore sentence of damnation fell on me and went against me."

[1] This extract from the Thornton MS. bears Rolle's name. The passage *On Perfect Contrition* which follows in the MS. will be found on pp. 190, 191 of my Edition of Richard Rolle's *Form of Perfect Living*, etc.

Ego dormio et cor meum vigilat.[1]

I SLEEP, BUT MY HEART WATCHETH.

I SLEEP, but my heart watcheth. Ye that list to love, hold (hither) your ears, and hear of love. In the Song of Love,[2] I find within that which I have set at the beginning of my writing, "I sleep, and my heart wakes." Great love he shews that never is irked to love, but aye, standing, sitting, going, or any other deed doing, is aye thinking on his love, and oftentimes dreaming thereof. Because I love thee, I woo thee, that I may have thee as I desire, not for myself but for my Lord. I would be a comer and messenger to bring thee to the bed of Him who made thee and bought thee, Christ the King's Son of Heaven: for He will wed thee if thou wilt love Him. He asks of thee no more save thy love. And thou dost my will, if thou lovest Him. Christ covets thy beauty of soul, and that thou shouldest give Him thine heart wholly. And I preach nought else but that thou shouldest do His will, and force thyself day and night to leave all fleshly love and all liking that hinders thee from loving Jesus Christ, verily: for whilst thy heart is being held to love any bodily thing thou mayest not be perfectly joined to God.

[1] The Rawlinson MS. contains two transcripts of this Epistle which Rolle addressed to a nun of Yeddingham. The present rendering has been made from the first of these two Texts, which is written in Rolle's own Northern dialect. The other is a copy in southern speech.

[2] Canticles, v. 2. (Vulg.)

In heaven are nine Orders of Angels; which are contained in three Hierarchies: the lowest Hierarchy contains Angels, Archangels, Virtues. The middle Hierarchy contains Powers, Principalities, Dominions. The highest Hierarchy, which is nearest to God, contains Thrones, Cherubim, Seraphim. The lowest Order is Angels, the highest Seraphim. And that Order which is least bright is seen as bright as this sun (of ours). And as thou seest the sun brighter than the candle, the candle brighter than the moon, the moon brighter than the stars, just so are the Orders of Heaven's Angels each one brighter than the other, from Angels to Seraphim.

This I say to enkindle thine heart to covet the fellowship of Angels. For all that are good and holy, when they pass out of this world, shall be taken into these Orders. Some, that have loved much, into the lowest. Some, that have loved more, into the middlemost. Others, that most loved God, and are most burning in His love, into the highest. Seraphim—that is to say "burning:" to which Order they are received who, in this world, covet least, and feel most sweetness in God, and have hearts most burning in love.

To thee, I write this specially, for I hope there is more goodness in thee than in any other; and that thou wilt give thy thought to fulfil in deed that which thou seest to be profitable to thy soul; and that thou wilt give thyself to the life in the which thou mayest most

wholly offer thine heart to Jesus Christ, and be least in this world's business.

For if thou wilt, stably and burningly love God whilst thou livest here, without doubt thy settle is ordained for thee, full high and joyful, before God's Face, among the holy Angels. For in those self same places, whence proud devils fell down, meek men and women, the doves of Christ, are set to have rest and joy without end (in return), for a little short penance and travail which they have suffered for the love of God.

Peradventure, now, thou thinkest it hard to give thine heart away from all earthly things, from idle speech, from all fleshly love, and go by thy lone to watch and pray and think on the Joy of Heaven : and to have compassion upon the Passion of Jesus Christ, and to picture the pain of hell which is ordained for sinful men. But surely, when once thou art used to this, it will seem to thee lighter and sweeter than ever did any earthly solace to thee.

As soon as thine heart is touched with Heaven's sweetness, the mirth of this world will little delight thee : and when thou dost feel joy in the love of Christ, thou wilt detest the joy and the comfort of earthly games. For all the melody, all the riches, all the delights that all the men in this world can ordain or think, seems, and is, nothing but annoyance and wrath to a man's heart that is verily burning in the love of God, because he has the mirth and melody of Angels' songs as thou wittest well.

If thou forsakest all things that delight thee fleshly, and have no thought of relatives or friends, but forsake all for God's love, and only give thine heart to covet God's love and to repay Him, thou shalt find more joy in Him than I can think.—How then could I write it?

I doubt if many men be in such love, for aye the higher is the life the fewer followers it has here. For many things draw men from love of God; that thou mayest hear and see. And God comforts His lovers more than they who love Him not ween. For though we often seem in penance without, we shall have full much joy within, if we order ourselves wisely in the service of God, and set Him in all our thoughts and forsake vanity.

Give all thine attention to understand this writing: and if thou hast set thy desire to love God, hear these three degrees of love, so that thou mayest rise from one to the other, until thou beest at the highest: for I will not conceal from thee that which I hope may turn thee to holiness.

The first degree of love is when a man keeps the Ten Commandments, and keeps himself from the Seven Deadly Sins, and is stable in the truth of Holy Church: and when a man will not for any earthly thing anger God, but stands truly in His service and endures therein to his life's end. It behoves every man who will be safe to have this degree of love. For no man can come to

Heaven unless he love God, and his neighbour, without pride, ire, envy or any backbiting, and without every other venomous sin, such as sloth, gluttony, lust and covetousness. For these vices slay the soul, and make it depart from God, Who is the life of the soul. And when a wretched man or woman is parted from God, we say he is dead, for away from God without Whom no creature can live, he is slain. As a man, poisoned by a sweet morsel, takes venom which slays his body, so does a sinful wretch in self-indulgence and lust, destroy his soul and bring it to death without end. Men think it sweet to sin, but their wage, that is ordained for them, is bitterer than gall, more sour than poisonous matter, worse than all the woe that man, on earth, can imagine.

Everything we see with our eyes perishes and passes. The weal of this world wanes into wretchedness. Robes and riches rot in the ditch. Pride and painting drift into sorrow. Delights and gallantries shall full soon stink. Their gold and their treasure will attract them, till their death. All the wicked of this world drive on to a dale;[1] that they may see their sorrow where Woe is the pack.[2] But when all the wretches from worldly weal fall into hell, he who loved Jesus Christ may sing of comfort.

But when thou hast lived well in the Commandments of God and hast stiffly kept thyself from all Deadly Sins,

[1] Death's valley?

[2] Of hounds.

and repaid Christ to that point; bethink thee that thou wilt love God more, and do better with thy soul and become perfect. And then thou dost enter into the other degree of love, that is to forsake all the world and thy Father and thy Mother and all thy kin, and in poverty follow Christ.

In this degree, thou shalt study how clean thou mayest be in heart, and how pure in body, and give thyself to meekness, suffering and obedience, and look how fair thou mayest make the soul in virtues, and hate all vices: so that thy life be ghostly and not fleshly; nevermore speaking ill of thy neighbour, nor give one ill word for another; but all that men say, ill or good, suffer it debonairly in thy heart, without stirring of wrath; and then shalt thou be in rest within, and shalt come lightly in to ghostly life, which thou shalt find sweeter than any earthly thing. Perfect and ghostly life is to despise the earth, covet the joy of heaven, and through God's grace destroy all wicked desires of the flesh. And forget the solace and liking of thy kindred, and love them only in God. Whether thou die or live, be poor or rich, be whole or sick, in woe or weal, ever thank thou God, and bless Him in all His Works: for His dooms are so privy, that no creature can comprehend them. And oftentimes, some men have their liking and their weal in this world, and hell in the other: and some men are in pain and persecution and anguish in this life, and have Heaven for their reward. Therefore, if thy friends be always

in care and health, and have wealth in this world, both thou and they may fear the more lest they lose endless joy. If they be in penance, in sickness, or if they live righteously, they may trust in God to come to His bliss. Therefore in this degree of love, thou shalt be so filled with grace by the Holy Ghost that thou shalt not have sorrow nor weeping save for ghostly things, and for thy sins and those of other men, and for the love of Jesus Christ, and in thinking on His Passion; and that I will that thou keep greatly in mind; for it will kindle thy heart to set at nought all this world's goods, all the joy of it, and to desire burningly the light of Heaven with angels and Saints.

And when thine heart is wholly ordained to the service of God, and all thought of the world is put out of it, then wilt thou desire to steal away by thy lone, to think of Christ, and to be in great praying: for through good thoughts and holy prayers thine heart shall be made burning in the love of Jesus Christ, and then shalt thou feel sweetness and ghostly joy both in praying and in thinking. And when thou art by thy lone give thyself much to saying the psalms of the Psalter, and Pater Noster and Aves; and take not care that thou say many, but that thou say them well, and with all the devotion that thou canst, lifting up thy thought to Heaven. Better is it to say seven psalms desiring Christ's love, having thy heart in thy prayer, than seven hundred while thou lettest thy thoughts pass in vanities to earthly things. What

good canst thou hope may come thereof if thou lettest thy tongue blabber[1] on the book, and thy heart run about the world in divers places where it will? Therefore, set thy thought on Christ, and He shall bind it to Him and hold it from the venom of this world's business. And I pray thee, as thou covetest to be God's lover, that thou love this Name Jesus, and think of it in thine heart so that thou never forgettest it, wheresoever thou beest: and truly I promise thee that thou shalt find therein great comfort and joy; and for that love wherewith thou lovest Jesus so tenderly and so specially, thou shalt be filled full of grace on earth, and be Christ's dear maiden and spouse in Heaven. For nothing so well repays God as true love of His Name Jesus. If thou lovest it rightly and lastingly and never leave off for anything men may say or do, thou shalt be raised unto a higher life than thou canst covet. His goodness is so great that when we ask Him for one He gives us three: so well repaid is He when we set our heart to love Him.

In this degree of love, thou shalt overcome thy three enemies: the world, the devil and the flesh; but never-the-latter[2] thou shalt ever have fighting while thou livest; and ever till thou diest it behoves thee to be busy neither to stand nor to fall into ill-delight, nor in ill-thought, nor in ill-word, nor in ill-deeds: because great ought thy

[1] Chatter.

[2] *Nevertheless*: this is one of Rolle's characteristically northern words.

yearning to be that thou shouldest love Christ truly. Thy flesh thou shalt overcome through keeping thy maidenhood, for God's love only. Or if thou beest not a maiden, through chaste living in thought and deed, and through discreet abstinence and reasonable service. The world thou shalt overcome through coveting Christ's love, and thinking of His sweet Name, and by desire to Heaven, for as soon as thou feelest savour in Jesus, thou wilt think all the world nought but vanity and trouble for men's souls. Thou wilt not then covet to be rich, to have many and fair mantles, many kirtles, many gallantries ; but all these thou wilt set at nought, despising all, and take no more than thou needest. Thou who now hast five or six, will then think two mantles or one enough. Therefore, give some to Christ, who goes naked and poor, and keep not all for thyself, thou who knowest not whether thy life be not half gone.

The devil is beaten when thou standest stably against all his temptations, in soothfast charity and meekness. And think on me, that I be never forgotten in thy prayers, who am longing that thou shouldest be dear to Christ Whose mercy I need.

I will that thou beest never idle, but ever either speaking of God, or working some notable work, or thinking principally of Him, that thy thought be ever having Him in mind. And think this often of His Passion.

Meditation on the Passion[1]

My King, Who wept water, and sweated blood: after, very sorely, they beat Him, as the scourges met. Full fast they began to beat Him, and swinged Him at the Pillar. His fair Face fouled with spitting. Thorns crown the King; full sore is that pricking: alas! my Joy, my sweet One is condemned to hang. His Hands were nailed, and nailed were His feet; and His Side, so sweet and seemly, was pierced. Naked His white Breast, all bloody His side, wan was His fair Face, His Wounds deep and wide. From five places of His flesh the Blood began to glide down, as the streaming of the sea does, His pain cannot be hidden. Great pity is it to think, how He is doomed to death (who is) the bright Angels' Bread. Driven to dolour is He Who is our ghostly Good; and fouled as though a fool (is) the Food of Heaven's Hallows. A wonder is it to see, if one understood, how the God of Majesty was dying on the Rood. But truly is it said that love leads that din, but it was no love which laid Him so low. Jesus receive my heart, and bring me to Thy love: all my desire Thou art, and Thy coming I covet. Make me clean from sin, and let us never part: kindle fire within me, that I may win to Thy love, and see Thy Face, Jesus, in bliss which shall never cease. Jesus, mend my soul and to me[2] send Thy love, that I

[1] In the Original, this Meditation, though written as though it were prose, is both rhymical and rimed.

[2] A leaf is here missing from the MS. Rawl: but the gap has been filled from the Vernon MS.

may live with Thee in never-ending joy. Turn my thoughts to love, and lift my heart to Thee; and make the soul which Thou hast bought stay with Thee. But how I covet Thee: for Thee this world I flee: Thou art He Whom I have sought, when shall I see Thy Face? Do Thou make my soul clear. Thy love changeth the look of me. How long shall I be here? When may I come near to Thee?—to hear Thy melody: oft to hear that song, which lasts and lasts so long? Wilt Thou be my Love, that I may sing of love to Thee?—

If thou wilt think thus, every day, thou shalt find great sweetness therein, such as shall draw thine heart up, and make thee fall to weeping, and to have great love to Jesus; and thy thought shall be reft from all earthly things, up above the sky and the stars, so that thine heart's eye may look into Heaven. And there thou enterest into the third degree of love.

In the which thou shalt be in great delight and comfort, if thou mayest get grace to come thereunto. For I say not that thou, nor any other, shalt do it at all, for that is in God's will, Who sheweth how to do what here is said, or some other thing in another manner, as He giveth men grace to their health. For different men take diverse gifts from our Lord Jesus Christ; and all who end in charity shall be set in the joy of Heaven. Whoever is in this degree, he has wisdom and discretion to love according to God's will.

This degree of love is called Contemplative love: which loves to be alone, away from noise and din, singing and crying. At the beginning, when thou comest thereto, thy ghostly eye is taken up in to the bliss of Heaven, and is illumined with grace and kindled with the fire of Christ's love, so that thou shalt verily have the burning of love in thy heart, lasting evermore; and thy thought evermore (drawn) upward to God, feeling the love of joy, and so much sweetness that no sickness, nor shame, nor anguish nor penance can grieve thee. But all thy love shall turn to joy. And then, for highness of thine heart thy prayers shall turn into joyful song, and thy thoughts into melody.

Then Jesus shall be all thy desire, all thy delight, all thy joy, all thy solace, all thy comfort, so that thy song shall be evermore of Him, and in Him all thy rest.

Then mayest thou say, "I sleep, but mine heart waketh."

Who shall to my Beloved say, that for His love I long alway?

All they who love vanities and particular joys of this world, and set their hearts on any other thing than God, cannot come into this degree. Nor into that other degree of love, named before.

And, therefore, it behoveth thee to forsake all this world's-solace, so that thine heart be not bound to the love of any creature, nor to any business of earth.

Ever must thou be in silence : stably and stalwartly, with heart and mouth love God.

Our Lord does not give men and women fairness, riches and pleasures that they may set their hearts wholly on them, and spend themselves in sin, but that they should know Him and love Him and thank Him for all His gifts. And, therefore, their shame is more, if they anger Him Who hath given them many gifts in body or in soul.

Therefore, if we covet to flee the pain of hell, purgatory, it behoveth us to restrain ourselves perfectly, in perfect love, from the lusts and likings, from the evil delights and from the wicked fear of this world; and that worldly sorrow be not in us; but that we ever hold our heart fast on Jesus Christ, and stand manfully against temptations.

Song of Love[1]

Now, I write a song of love that thou shalt delight in when thou art loving Jesus Christ.

My song is in sitting : my life is in longing, that I should see my Darling, so fair in His shining. So fair is Thy fairness, lead me into Thy light, and feed me with Thy love : in love make me to speed, and be Thou ever my need.

[1] This heading is from the Cambridge MS.

When wilt Thou come, Jesus my joy and recover me from care, and give Thyself that I may see and have Thee for evermore? All my coveting were done if I might fare to Thee. I wish for no thing, save only Thee; that is all my will. Jesus, my Saviour, Jesus, my comforter, Flower of all Fairness, my help and my succour: when may I see Thee in Thy tower[1]? When wilt Thou me call? I am longing for Thy hall, to see Thee and them all: Thy love, let it not fail. Now wax I pale and wan, for love of my Beloved: Jesus both God and Man, Thy love Thou taughtest me then, when to Thee fast I ran. Therefore, now can I love.

I sit and sing of love-longing, bred in mine heart. Jesus, Jesus, Jesus, why am I not led to Thee. For well I know Thou seest my state; my thought is stayed on love When I see Thee, and dwell with Thee [2] then am I filled and fed. Jesus, Thy love is fast; I think it best to love: when may my heart burst, to come to Thee, my Rest? Jesus, Jesus, Jesus, 'tis to Thee I mourn: therefore, my Life, my Beloved, why may I not thither turn: Jesus my Dear, my Treasury: delight Thou art to sing: Jesus, Mirth, my Melody; when wilt Thou come, my King? Jesus, my Health, my Honey, my Heart, my Comforting: Jesus I covet death, when it is Thy reward. Longing is lent to me, my Beloved sent it: all woe has gone from me, since my heart has burned.

[1] This, and a few other words, Rolle obviously uses for the sake of rime: in the original tower rimes with flower.

[2] Here the MS. Rawl. begins again.

In the love of Christ so sweet, I will never let it go ; ever to love I promise, for love may beat my bale,[1] and bring me to my bliss and give me my desire. Jesus, my sweetest Love ; longing is light to me, though it binds me day and night, until I have in sight, His Face so fair and bright. Jesus, my Hope and Health, my Joy in every place ; let not Thy love grow cool, let me feel Thy love, and dwell with Thee in weal. Jesus of Thee I beg, and grow bold ; I would rather die than wield power over all this world and have its mastery. When wilt Thou have compassion on me, Jesus, so that I may be with Thee, to love, to look on Thee ? Prepare my settle for me, and do Thou set me therein : for then we should never part, but I should sing of Thy love, through my sight of Thy bright-shining. In Heaven with never an ending. Amen.

Here finishes the Tract of Richard, Hermit of Hampole, written to a Nun of Yeddingham.

[1] Conquer my calamity.

CONCERNING THE LIFE OF A WOMAN ENCLOSED FOR LOVE OF CHRIST[1]

ALSO, the Clerk Heraclides tells that a maiden forsook her city, and sat in a sepulchre, and took her food at a little hole. For ten years, she saw neither man nor woman, nor they her face. But she stood at a hole and told why she was enclosed: and said that "a young man was tempted by my beauty: therefore, I would rather stay in this sepulchre as long as I live, than that any soul, which was made in God's likeness, should perish because of me." And when men asked her how she passed her life; she said: "From the beginning of the day I give myself to prayer till dawn; then I work at something with my hands: and also I work in thoughts, by (help of) Patriarchs, Prophets, Apostles, Martyrs, Confessors, and behold their joy. And afterwards, I take my food. When even comes, with great joy I love my Lord. I await the end of my life in good hope and patience." And lo! so perfectly a woman lived. Richard Hermit rehearses this tale as an example.

[1] This fragment from the Thornton MS. has been rejected by one Editor. It bears Richard's name at the end: Dr Horstman accepted it as genuine.

A GREAT CLERK[1]

A GREAT Clerk, whom men call Richard of S. Victor, sets down in a book that he makes Contemplation to be three workings of a Christian man's soul. They are these : Thought, Thinking and Contemplation. And that a man may know each one surely by itself, he tells what difference there is between these three. He says Thought is without travail and without fruit : and Thinking is with travail and with fruit. Thou shalt know that Thinking and Meditation are the same thing. Contemplation is without great travail, but with great fruit. And thou that greatly desirest to come to Contemplation, I think that thou greatly needest[2] . . . . .

[1] This fragment, from the MS. Camb., is imperfect through the tearing out of leaves.

[2] The leaves containing the rest have been torn out.

THE COMMANDMENT OF LOVE OF GOD[1]

Richard Hermit

GOD'S commandment is that we love our Lord : in all our heart, in all our soul, in all our thought. In all our heart, that is in all our understanding without any error. In all our soul, that is with our whole will, without gainsaying. In all our thought, that is that we think on Him without forgetting. In this way is very and true love, which is the work of man's will. For love is a will-full[2] stirring of our thought towards God ; so that it receives nothing that is against the love of Jesus Christ, and that withal it be lasting in sweetness of devotion : and that is this life's perfection. To the which all deadly sin is contrary and an enemy, but not venial sin : for venial sin doeth not away with charity, but only hindereth the use and burning thereof. Therefore, all who will love God perfectly, it behoveth them not only to flee all deadly sins, but also as much as they can, all venial sin, in thought and word and deed ; and especially to be of little speech—and (let) that silence be in the occupation of good thoughts. It helps greatly to God's love. For janglers and backbiters who damage other men's lives with wicked words, and all those who love their own condition first of all, or despise any condition

[1] This tract has survived in various MSS. The present rendering is made from the MS. Rawl, described by Dr Horstman as "faithful." It is addressed "to a Sister of Hampole."

[2] That is, *intentional ;* actively willing.

in which a man may be safe, they have no more sight in their soul of the Love of God than a bat's eye hath of the sun. For vain speech and ill words are the signs of a vain heart and of evil that is without the grace of God. But he who ever speaks that which is good, and holds every man (to be) better than himself, he sheweth well that he is stable in goodness in his heart, and full of charity to God and his neighbour.

And that thou mayest come to the sweetness of God's love, I set down here three degrees of Love, in which thou shouldest be waxing.

The first degree is called *Insuperable*, the tother (second) *Inseparable :* the third *Singular*.

Thy love is *Insuperable* when nothing can overcome it : that is, neither weal nor woe ; ease nor anguish, lust of the flesh nor love of this world ; but aye it endures in God even were it tempted greatly ; and it hates all sin, so that nothing can quench that love.

Thy love is *Inseparable* when all thy thoughts and all thy wills are gathered together and fastened wholly in Jesus Christ, so that thou mayest (at) no time forget Him, but ever thou thinkest on Him ; and, therefore, it is called Inseparable, for it cannot be separated from the thought of Jesus Christ.

That love is *Singular* when all thy delight is in Jesus Christ, and thou findest joy or comfort in no other thing.

In this degree is Love stalwart as death, and hard as hell: for as death slays every living thing in this world, so perfect Love slays in a man's soul all fleshly desires and earthly covetousness. And as hell spareth naught to dead men, but torments all who come thereto, so a man that is in this degree of love, not only does he forsake the wretched comfort of this life, but he is covetous also to suffer pains for God's love. Therefore, if thou listest to love anything love Jesus Christ, Who is fairest, richest and wisest, whose love lasts into endless joy: for all earthly love is passing, and goes soon away; nought that falleth into it is lasting save the pain it hath deserved. If thou beest covetous for good, love Him, and thou hast all Good; desire of Him truly and thou shalt want nothing. If pleasures delight thee, love Him: for He giveth to His lovers pleasures that can never perish: but all the pleasures of this world are faint and false and fail in (our) greatest need. They begin in sweetness and their ending is bitterer than gall.

If thou canst not live without fellowship: lift thy thoughts to heaven, that thou mayest feel comfort with angels and saints, who will help thee to good, and not hinder thee as thy fleshly friends do.

Restrain thy will a while from all desire and liking for sin, and thou shalt have afterward all thy will; for it shall be cleansed and made so free that thou wilt desire to do nothing but what is satisfying to God.

If thou desirest to speak, forbear at its beginning for God's love, for when thy heart feeleth delight in Christ thou wilt not desire to speak nor to chatter save of Christ. If thou canst not dare to sit by thy lone, practise thyself stalwartly in His love, and He shall set thee so stably, that all the comfort of this world shall not be able to move thee, for thou wilt not wish to do so. When thou art by thyself, be ever, till sleep come, either in prayer or good meditation.

And order thy waking and thy praying and thy fasting that it be with discretion, not over-much nor over-little ; and ever think that of all things the love of man's heart pleaseth God most.

And, therefore, seek more to love Him than to do any penance ; for unskilful penance is little or nothing worth ; but love is ever the best, whether thou doest much penance or little.

Be trying with all thy might that thou wert so inwardly given to the love of Jesus Christ, that for the ghostly joy in thy soul, nought that man can say or do shall make thee sorry ; so that thy inward thought may be fed only upon the sweetness of Christ's love ; not in pleasure in earthly ease, nor in loving men, if they begin to speak well of thee, nor in idle joy.

Trust in God, that He will give thee things which thou prayest of Him suitably. Wise prayer for a Christain man's soul, is to seek and to ask night and day for the

love of Jesus Christ, that it may love Him truly, feeling comfort and delight in Him ; out-casting thoughts of the world and of evil business.

And thou art secure, if thou covetest His love truly and lastingly so that no pleasure of the flesh, nor wrath of the world, nor talk nor hatred of men draw thee back again and cast thee into the business of bodily things : thou shalt have His love, and feel that one hour of it is more delectable than all the wealth we see here can be till Doom's-day. And if thou dost fail and fall into temptations, or from tempers, or over much love of thy friends ; it is no wonder if He with-hold from thee the thing thou desirest not truly. He says He loves them who love Him, and they that wake early to find Him shall. Thou art often times waking early ; why then findest thou not Him. Certainly if thou seekest Him right thou shalt find Him ; but whilst thou seekest earthly joy, though thou wakest never so early, Christ thou mayest not find, for He is not found in their land who live in fleshly pleasures.

His mother, when He was commanded (to go) from her, sought weeping, early and late among His and her kindred. But she found Him not for all her calling and her sorrowing, till at the last she came in to the Temple, and there she found Him sitting among the Masters, listening and answering. So, if thou wilt find Him, it behoveth thee to do ; seek inwardly, in truth and hope

and charity of Holy Church, casting out all sin and hating it with all thy heart; for that holds Him from thee, and hinders thee that thou mayest not find Him.

The herdsmen who sought found Him lying in a Crib between two beasts, that thou knowest: if thou seekest Him verily; it behoves thee to go in the way of poverty not of riches.

The star led the Three Kings into Bethlehem; there they found Christ simply in swaddling cloths like a poor child. Understand thereby that whilst thou art in pride and vanity thou findest Him not. How for shame canst thou, who art but a servant, follow, in many and rich clothes, thy spouse and thy Lord Who went in a tunic: and thou trailest behind thee as much as He had on? Therefore, I counsel thee to part with them, ere thou and He meet, that He reprove thee not for outrage; for He wills thee to have that thou hast need of and no more. He said to His disciples that they might not have as many clothes as two could be sustained with;—for to be burdened therewith is outrageous trouble which He forbids.

The love of Jesus is full dear treasure, full delectable joy, and full secure for men to trust in. Therefore, He will not give it to fools, that cannot hold it and keep it tenderly: but He gives it to those who neither for weal nor for woe will let it pass from them, but they will die ere they will make Jesus Christ wroth.

No wise man puts precious liquor in a stinking vessel but in a clean. So Christ puts not His love in a heart foul with sin, and bound in vile lust of the flesh : but in a heart that is fair and clean in virtues. Never-the-latter, a foul vessel can be made so clean that a very dear thing may safely be put therein. And oft times Jesus Christ purges many a sinful man's soul, and makes it able through His grace to receive the delectable sweetness of His love, and to be His dwelling-place in holiness : and ever the cleaner it waxeth, the more joy and heavenly comfort Christ sets therein. Therefore, at the first time a man is turned to God, he cannot feel that sweet liquor, till he has been well used in God's service, and his heart is purged through prayers and penance and good thoughts in God ; for he who is slow in God's service cannot be burning in love ; unless he do all his might and travail night and day to fulfil God's will. And when that blessed love is in a man's heart, it will not suffer him to be idle, but ever it stirs him to do some good which might be pleasing to God, as in praying, or in working profitable things, or in speaking of Jesus Christ ; and principally in thought, that the memory of Jesus Christ pass not from his thought. For if thou lovest Him truly, thou wilt rejoice in Him and in no other thing ; and thou wilt think on Him, casting away all other thoughts. But if thou beest false, and takest other than Him, and delightest thyself in earthly things against His will, wit thou well that He will forsake thee as thou hast done Him, and damn thee for thy sin.

Wherefore, that thou mayest love Him truly, understand that love of Him is proved by three things: in thinking, in speaking, in working.

Change thy thought from the world and cast it wholly on Him, and He shall nourish thee. Change thy mouth from unprofitable and worldly speech, and speak of Him, and He shall comfort thee.

Change thy hands from works of vanities and lift them up in His Name and work only for love of Him, and He shall receive thee. Do this, and thou lovest Him truly and goest in the way of perfectness. Delight thyself so in Him that thy heart receives neither the world's joy nor the world's sorrow; and dread no anguish nor hurt which may befall thee bodily nor any of thy friends, but commit everything to God's will, and ever thank Him for all His sendings, so that thou have rest and savour in His love for if thine heart be led either with fear of the world or by the world's comfort, thou art very far from the sweetness of Christ's love.

And look well that thou seemest not one thing without and beest another within, as hypocrites do, who are like a sepulchre richly painted outside, while within stinking bones rot. If thou hast delight in the name of religion look that thou hast more delight in the deeds which belong to religion. Thine habit saith that thou hast forsaken the world, that thou art given to God's service, that thou delightest thee not in earthly things:

look then that it be in thy heart as it looks in men's sight—for nothing can make thee religious save virtues and cleanness of soul in charity. If thy body be clothed without as thine Order wills, look that thy soul be not naked within—that which thine Order forbids : but be thy soul naked from all vices, and warmly wrapped in love and meekness.

Dread the dooms of God, so that thou anger Him not : stable thy thought in His love, and keep all sins out of thee : cast away slowness, practice thyself manfully in goodness.

Be debonair and meek to all men ; let nothing bring thee to wrath or envy ; set thy soul in order fairly ; make in it a throne of love for God's Son; and make thy will covetous to receive Him as gladly as thou wouldest be at the coming of a thing thou lovedst above everything. Wash thy thoughts clean with love-tears and burning longing, so that He may find no foul thing in thee ; for His joy is that thou shouldest be beautiful and lovesome in His eyes.

The beauty of thy soul that He covets is that thou shouldest be chaste and meek, mild and patient, never irked to do His will, ever hating all wretchedness. In all that thou dost, ever think to come to the sight of His beauty, and set all thine intention thereon that at thine ending thou mayest come thereto—for while we live here, that ought to be the aim of all our travail, that evermore we desire that sight with all our heart ; and that ever and long we think upon it.

Also fasten in thine heart the memory of His passion and of His wounds : great delight and sweetness shalt thou feel if thou keepest thy thoughts mindful of the pain which Christ suffered for thee.

If thou travailest rightly in His love, and desire Him burningly, thou shalt, through His grace overcome and tread under thy feet all temptations and fears of evil : for all whom He sees loving Him in goodwill He helps them against all their enemies, and raises their thoughts above earthly things, so that they may have a savour of heaven's sweetness. Purchase for thyself the well of weeping, and cease not until thou hast it : for in the heart where tears spring up, there will the fire of the Holy Ghost be kindled : and thereafter the fire of love which shall burn in thine heart, will bring to nothing all the rust of sin, and purge thy soul from all filth as clean as gold that is proved in a furnace.

I know nothing that shall so piercingly move thine heart to covet God's love and the joy of it, and to despise this world's vanities as steadfast thinking about the hurts and grievous wounds and of the death of Jesus Christ. It will raise thy thought above earthly pleasure, and make thine heart burning in the love of Christ, and purchase for thy soul the delectability and savour of heaven.

But peradventure thou wilt say, " I cannot despise the world, I cannot find it in my heart to punish my body, and it behoveth me to love my fleshly friends, and to take

ease when it comes." If thou beest tempted with such thoughts, I pray thee to bethink thyself from the beginning of the world—where are the world's lovers now, and where are the lovers of God? Certainly, they were men and women as we are, and ate and drank and laughed: and the wretches who loved this world took ease for their bodies, and lived as they listed in the pleasure of their wicked wills, and spent their days in pleasure and delights; and in a moment they fell into hell. Now, thou mayst see that they were fools and foul gluttons who wasted in a few years that endless joy prepared for them if they would have done penance for their sins.

Thou seest that all the riches and delight of this world vanish away and come to nought. Soothly so do all the lovers of them; for nothing can stand stably on a false ground. Their bodies are given to worms in the earth and their souls to the devils in hell.

But all who forsook the pomp and vanity of this life, and stood stalwartly against all temptations, and ended in the love of God, they are now in joy, and have the heritage of Heaven, there to dwell without end, resting in the delights of the sight of God; for here they sought no more rest nor ease for their body than they had need of.

One thing I counsel thee, that thou forgettest not this Name, Jesus; but think of It in thine heart, night and day, as thy special and thy dear treasure. Love It more than thy life, and root It in thy mind. Love Jesus, for

He made thee, and bought thee full dearly. Give thine heart to Him for it is a debt to Him. Therefore set thy love on His Name Jesus, which is (thy) health.

No evil thing can have dwelling in that heart where Jesus is truly kept in memory: for it chases devils, it destroys temptations, it puts away wicked fears and vices, and cleanses thought. Whoso loves it verily is full of God's grace and virtues, in ghostly comfort in this life, and when they die, they are taken up into the orders of angels, to see Him Whom they have loved, in endless joy.

Here finishes the Tract of Richard Hampole, written to a Sister of Hampole[1].

[1] This note is appended to the version in the MS. Camb. not to that in the MS. Rawl.

THE GIFTS OF THE HOLY GHOST

THE seven gifts of the Holy Ghost which are given to men and women who are ordained to the Joy of Heaven, and who lead their life in this world righteously. These are they: Wisdom; Understanding; Counsel; Strength; Knowledge; Pity; The Fear of God. Let us begin at Counsel, for there is need thereof at the beginning of our works so that we mistake nothing afterwards. With these seven gifts the Holy Ghost teaches each man separately. Counsel is doing away the world's riches, and of all delight in all things that a man may be tagled[1] with in thought or deed; and therewith drawing (a man) into contemplation of God.

Understanding is to know what is to be done and what is to be left: and that shall be given as a gift to them who have need, not to others who have no need.

Wisdom is forgetting earthly things and thinking of heaven, with discretion in all common deeds. In this gift contemplation shines, that is, S. Austin says a ghostly action of fleshly affections through the joy of uplifted thought.

Strength is endurance to fulfil good purpose, that it be not given up for weal or for woe.

[1] It seems a pity to lose this delightful word. It is connected with *takel* the Middle English form of tackle. Primarily, tackle means a grasp, a seizure of, a hold on something; thence gear, rigging, etc. The verb here has the meaning of tied-up, or better *ensnared*.

Pity is that a man be mild ; and do not gainsay Holy Writ when it smites his sins, whether he understand it or not, but with all his might he purges the meanness of sin in himself and in others.

Knowledge is that which makes a man of good hope, not quaking for his righteousness, but sorrowing for his sins : and that man gathers earthly goods only for God's honour, and the advantage of other men than himself.

The Fear of God is that we turn not again to our sins for any evil egging-on. And then is Fear perfect in us and ghostly when we dread to anger God by the smallest sin that we can know, when we flee from it as from venom. *Explicit.*

Speculum S. Edmundi

THE MIRROR OF S. EDMUND[1]

Here begins the Mirror of S. Edmund, the Archbishop of Canterbury.

(1.) *Videte vocacionem vestram.* These words S. Paul says in his Epistle, and they are as much as to say in English, " See your calling." This word belongs to us folk in religion: and he says that to excite us to perfection. And therefore, at whatever hour I think of myself, by night or by day, on one side I have great Joy, and on another side great sorrow. Joy for the holy religion, sorrow and confusion for my feeble conversation. And that is no wonder for I have great cause. As the wise man[2] says in his sermon, he says ; " to come to religion is sovereign perfection, not to live therein perfectly is sovereign damnation. And therefore, there is no turn of the way to come into the congregation but one, that is to draw towards perfection, and as thou dost will thy

[1] The *Speculum Ecclesiæ* is the most important work of S. Edmund Rich, of Abingdon (1180-1240) Archbishop of Canterbury. The Latin original was turned into Middle English, of which two renderings exist ; a northern one in the MS. Thornton, and one in the Vernon MS. in Somerset dialect, closer than the other to the Latin. The present rendering is made from the MS. Thornton because, as Dr Horstman wrote :—" The Speculum is the great storehouse from which R. Rolle derived some of his favourite subjects and ideas ; and though the translator's name is not given in either MS., it is highly probable that R. Rolle himself is the translator ; at least, its northern origin is beyond doubt."

[2] S. Eusebius.

salvation, to leave everything that is in the world and that belongs thereto, and to set thy might to live perfectly."

(ii.) To live perfectly, as S. Bernard teaches us, that is to live honourably, meekly, lovesomely. Honourably as to God: that thou settest thine intent to do His will, that is to say: that in all things which thou shalt think in thine heart, or say with thy mouth, or do in deed with any of thy five wits, as with seeing of the eye, hearing of ear, smelling of nose, swallowing of throat, touching of hand, going or standing, lying or sitting, think at the beginning if that it be God's will or not. And if it be God's will do it at thine utmost strength; and if it be not His will, do it not though thou shouldest suffer death. But now, thou mayest ask me "What is God's will?" I tell thee that His will is no other thing but thy holiness, as the Apostle said in his Epistle: *Hec est Voluntas dei: sanctificacio vestra;* which is to say, "that is God's will that ye be holy."

(iii). But now thou mayest ask me: "What makes a man holy?" I tell thee, two things without any more, that is knowing and love. Knowing of soothfastness and love of goodness. But to the knowing of God, which is soothfastness, thou mayest not come except by knowing of thy-self, nor yet mayest thou come to the love of God but through the love of thine even-Christian. To the knowing of thyself thou mayest come by busy umbethinking:[1] and to the knowing of God by pure contemplation.

[1] *i.e.*, by thinking all round a thing, meditation.

To the knowing of thyself thou mayest come in this manner: Think busily and often what thou art, what thou wast, and what thou shall be. First as to thy body. Thou are viler now than any muck. Thou wast made of such vile matter, of so great filth, as it is shameful to name and abominable to think of. Thou shalt be delivered to toads and to adders to eat[1]. Now, shalt thou think what, as to thy soul, thou hast been and what thou art; for what thou shalt be, thou mayest not wit now. Bethink thee now how thou hast done great sins and many, and how thou hast left undone great goodnesses and many. Think how long thou hast lived, and what thou hast received, and how thou hast expended it. For every hour that thou hast not thought on God, thou hast lost. For thou shalt yield up a reason for every one idle thought, for every one idle deed, for every one idle word. And just as thou hast not one hair on thy head, that shall not be glorified if so be thou art saved; right so shall not one hour escape but it shall be accounted for. Ah! Jesu mercy! If all this world were full of small powder who should be so knowing[2], that he should or might judge each mote by itself, and divide one from another? Certainly, no man. But the soul is a thousand times greater than all this world, were that a thousand times greater

[1] The Somerset's line rendering runs, "Thou shalt be meat for vile toads and worms."

[2] Rolle uses the original of our word quaint, from O. French cointe (Lat. cognitus = known) with the sense of skill which springs from knowledge. The Somerset translation of the Latin uses "sly" in the same place.

than it is : and it (the soul) is all full of divers thoughts, likings and yearnings : who could then so search his heart, that he might know all which is therein or think of it? See now, my dear hearty friend, how thou hast great need of knowing thyself. Then afterwards, take good heed what thou art afterwards as to thy soul : how thou hast little of good in thee and little of wit, and little of power ; for thou desirest every day what avails thee not, and evermore, over-lately,[1] that which might avail thee. Dear friend, thou art deceived so often with vain joy, now travailed with dread, now thou art lifted aloft with false trust.[2] See then on the other side, thou art so changeable, that which that thou wilt do to-day thou wilt not tomorrow, and oftentimes thou art annoyed about many things, and torment thyself if thou have them not ; and afterwards when thou hast them at thy will, art thou annoyed at those very things. Think again on the other side how thou art light to tempt, frail to stand against,[3] and ready to assent. From all these wretchednesses, Jesus, thy Spouse, has now delivered thee, and delivers thee, every day, more and more. For when thou wast nought, He made thee in soul after His own likeness and

[1] The Somerset version reads less poignantly " seldom or no time that which may help thee." Rolle, if it be his work, is more than a literal translator ; something of himself passes into S. Edmund's text.

[2] Or, as the Somerset MS. runs :—" Thou art often deceived, now through too great sorrow, now through vain-glory : now art thou travailed of fear ; now thou art heaved on high through false hope."

[3] Refuse.

His image, and made thy body of foul stinking scum of the earth, whereof it is abomination to think. He made thee in wit and in members so noble and so fair as none other can devise. Think now busily, you that have fleshly friends and kindred, why ye love them so dearly and so tenderly. If thou sayest that thou lovest thy father and thy mother because thou art gotten of their blood and flesh : so are the worms that come of them day by day. On the other side thou hast from them neither body nor soul, but thou hast them from God through them. For what shouldest thou have been hadst thou remained such as thou wast of them begotten in filth and Sin ? On the other side, if thou lovest brothers and sisters or other kindred, because they are of the same flesh and blood of thy father and mother, for the same reason thou shouldest love a piece of their flesh were it shorn away, and that should be an error great beyond measure. If thou sayest that thou lovest them because they have a fleshly figure in man's likeness and because they have a soul just as thou hast, then is thy fleshly brother no nearer than another, but in so much that he and thou both have fleshly from a father and mother the beginning of thy flesh. Therefore, thou shalt love Him from Whom comes all thy fairness : and thou shalt love every man in ghostly wise, and from this time forth flee fleshly love.

(iv.) And so shalt thou certainly do if thou thinkest suitably of the good things that He has done goodly for

thee; and more shall He do if thou lovest Him entirely.[1] For, as I said at the beginning, when thou wast nought He made thee of nought; and when thou wast destroyed He found thee, and when thou wast perishing He sought thee; and when thou wast sold into sin He bought thee, and when thou wast damned, then He saved thee. And when thou wast born in sin He baptised thee: and then afterwards when thou didst sin so fully and so often, then He suffered thee so freely and waited so long for thine amendment: and then received thee so sweetly and has set thee in so sweet a fellowship. And every day when thou doest amiss, He reproves thee, and when thou repentest thee, then He forgives thee: and when thou dost err, then He amends thee; and when thou art afraid[2] then He teaches thee; and when thou hungerest then He feeds thee, and when thou art cold then He warms thee; and when thou feelest heat He cools thee, and when thou sleepest He keeps thee safe, and when thou dost arise then He upholds thee, and ever more when thou art ill at ease He comforts thee.

(v.) These and many other goodnesses has thy sweet Spouse, Jesus Christ, done unto thee. And evermore shalt thou think of the sweetness of His heart, and speak thereof: and evermore love Him, and ever thank

[1] Rolle has slightly altered this: the Somerset MS. which follows the original closely reads:—"If thou thinkest inwardly of the goodness He hath done thee, and shall do thee if thou lovest Him entirely, it shall stir thee to love Him more heartily."

[2] In the Somerset version—"doubtest?"

Him, and that both by night and day, if thou knowest aught of love.

And therefore, when thou risest out of thy bed in the morning or at midnight, think at once how many thousand men and women have perished in body and soul that night, some in fire, some in some other way, as in the water or on land. Some robbed, wounded, slain, suddenly dead without sacraments and fallen into everlasting damnation. Think also how many thousand that night have fallen into soul-peril, that is to say into deadly sin, as into gluttony, lust, covetousness, man-slaying and into many other follies. And from all these ills, without any desiring of thine thy sweet Lord Jesus has delivered thee. What service hast thou done that He should keep thee in this way, when many others are lost and forsaken? Forsooth, if thou takest good heed what great good He has done thee on every side thou shalt find Him occupied about thy profit as if He did no other thing, but were only listening to thee and to thy well-being; as if He had forgotten all this world to be only attending to thee. And when thou hast this thought, lift up thy hands and thank thy Lord for this and all other goods, and say on this manner :—

Gracias tibi ago domine Jhesu Criste, qui me indignum famulum tuum N. in hac nocte vel die custodisti, protexisti, visitasti, sanum saluum & incolumem ad hanc horam pervenire fecisti; et pro aliis vniuersis beneficiis

tuis que michi tua sola pietate contulisti, qui viuis & regnas deus, &c.

This prayer is thus to say in English :—" My Lord Jesus Christ, I yield Thee grace and thank Thee that Thou hast kept me Thine unworthy servant this night and this day, and hast covered and visited me ; and hast made me come to this time whole, safe and spotless, and for all other goods and benefits which Thou hast given me only through Thy goodness and Thy pity ; Thou that livest and reignest endlessly, Amen." Dear friend, in this same manner shalt thou say when thou risest at morn, and when thou liest down at even. And when thou hast done so, then shalt thou busily think how thou hast spent that day or that night, and pray God for mercy on that ill that thou hast done, and on the good thou hast left undone, until that time. And dear friend, do nothing in this life till thou hast commended thyself and thy friends, the quick and the dead, into the hands of thy sweet Lord Jesus Christ ; and say on this manner :

In manus tuas, domine & sanctorum angelorum tuorum, commendo in hac nocte (vel die) animam meam et corpus meum, et patrem et matrem, fratres et sorores, amicos, familiares, propinquos, parentes, benefactores meos, et omnem populum catholicum. Custodi nos, domine, in hac nocte (vel die) per merita et intercessionem beate Marie et omnium sanctorum, a viciis, a concupis (c) enciis, a peccatis et temptacionibus diaboli,

a subitania et improvisa morte, et a penis inferni. Illumina cor meum de Spiritu sancto & de tua sancta gracia ; et fac me semper tuis obedire mandatis, & a te nunquam separare permittas ; qui viuis et regnas deus, &c.

And this version is as much as to say:—" Lord Jesus Christ, into Thy hands and into the hands of Thy holy angels I give in this night (or this day) my soul and my body, my father and my mother, my brothers and sisters, friends and servants, neighbours and kindred, my benefactors, and all folk rightly believing. Keep us, Lord, in this night (or this day) through the good deeds and the prayers of Thy blessed Maiden Mary and all Thy Hallows, from vices and from wicked desires, from sins and from temptations of the devil, from sudden and unconsidered death, and from the pains of hell. Light my heart with the Holy Ghost, and with Thy holy grace. Lord, do Thou make me to be evermore buxom to Thy biddings, and suffer me nevermore to separate from Thee, endless Jesus, Lord in Trinity. Amen." My dear friend, if thou hast this habit, then shalt thou have very knowing of thyself : for thus says Holy Writ :—" If thou trustest to thyself alone, to thyself thou shalt be given : but if thou trustest on God and not on thyself, to God shalt thou be given. And this manner of consideration is called meditation : and by this manner of knowing thyself and by this manner of meditation shalt thou come to the knowing of God by holy contemplation.

(vi.) Wit thou that there be three ways of contemplation : The first is in creatures. The tother is in Holy Scripture. The third is in God Himself in His Nature. Thou shalt wit that contemplation is no other thing but thought of God in great liking in soul, and to see His goodness in His creatures. His goodness in His creatures mayest thou see in this manner. Three things principally are in God, Might, Wisdom and Goodness. Might is appropriated to God the Father, Wisdom to God the Son, Goodness to God the Holy Ghost. Through God's Might are all things made ; and through His wisdom are all things marvellously ordained, and through His Goodness every day are all things growing. His power mayest thou see by their greatness and by their making : His wisdom by their fairness and their ordaining ; His goodness mayest thou see by their increasing. Their greatness thou mayest see by their four parts, that is to say by their height and by their deepness, and by their largeness[1] and by their length. His wisdom thou mayest see if thou takest heed how He has given to each creature to be. Some, he has given simply to be and no more, as stones. To others, to be and to live, as to grass and trees. To others, to be, to live, to feel, as to beasts. To others, to be, to live, to feel, and to judge by reason, as to men and angels. For stones are, but they have no life, they feel nought and judge nought. Trees are, they live but they feel not . . . . .[2] Men are, they live, they

[1] Width.

[2] The Vernon MS. furnishes the sentence omitted by the Thornton : "Beasts be, live and feel, but they have no reason."

feel, they judge, and like stones they are, like trees they live, like beasts they feel, and they judge as angels do. Here shalt thou think busily[1] on the worth of man's nature, how it over-passes every other creature's. And therefore Saint Austin says :—" I would not have the state of an angel if I might have the place that is provided for man." Consider also that a man is worthy of great ignominy who will not live as his degree and condition require. For all the creatures in the world are only made for man. Those that are meek are made for three reasons ; to help us at work, as neat, oxen, cows, and the horse :[2] for to cover us and clothe us as linen, and wool and leather : for to feed and maintain us, as beasts, corn of the earth, fish of the sea. And the annoying[3] creatures, as ill-trees and venomous beasts ; which are made for three things ; for our chastisement, for our amendment, and for our knowledge. We are chastised and punished when we are hurt. And that is God's great mercy, that He will chastise us bodily so that we be not punished everlastingly. We are amended when we reflect that all these are brought to us for our sins ; for when we think such little creatures can annoy us, then we think of our wretchedness, and then we are meeked. We are afterwards

[1] The recurrence of the word " busily " suggests Rolle's authorship of this northern rendering in the Thornton MS. The Somerset (Vernon) version does not use it.

[2] Rolle goes into details about the special animals : the Somerset scribe does not. It will be noticed that linen (from flax) and corn go in along with fish as " creatures."

[3] Injurious, hurtful.

taught because that we see in these creatures the wonderful works of God our Maker; for the works of the pismire avail more for our example and edification than does the strength of the lion or of the bear. Also, just as I have said of beasts, right so understand of trees, and when thou hast done in this manner, raise up thine heart to God, and think what great might it is to make all things of nought and to give them to thee, and great wisdom to ordain them in so great fairness, and great bounty to multiply them every day for our profit. Ah![1] mercy, O God, how unkind we are. We waste all His creatures and He makes them. We confound them and He governs them. We destroy them every day, and He multiplies them. And, therefore, say to Him in thine heart, " Lord because Thou art, they are; and because Thou art fair, they are fair, and because Thou art good, they are good. With good right they love Thee, and honour Thee, and glorify Thee, all Thy creatures, O Blessed God in Trinity! With good right they love Thee for their goodness; with good right, they honour Thee for their fairness; with good right they glorify Thee for their profit, all Thy creatures, Blessed Trinity! of Whom all things are made through His power; through Whom all things are governed through His wisdom, in Whom all things are multiplied through His bounty: to Him honour and loving without end. Amen.

[1]This lament is not included in the Somerset version.

SECOND PART.

(vii.) The tother degree of contemplation is in Holy Writ. But now thou mayest say to me, " I who know no letters, how may I ever come to contemplation of Holy Writ? Now, my dear friend, understand me sweetly, and I shall perchance say to thee all that is written. If thou canst not understand Holy Writ, hear gladly the good things that men tell thee : and when thou hearest Holy Writ, either in a sermon or in private discourse, take heed at once if thou hearest ought that may avail thee to edification, to hate sin and to love virtue, and to conquer pain and desire joy, to despise this world, to hie thee to bliss : and what thou shalt do and what thou shalt leave ; and all that lights thine understanding in knowing soothfastness, and all that kindles thy pleasure in the burning of love, for all that is written is hiddenly or openly of those two goods. Out of Holy Writ thou shalt draw and can know which are the Seven Deadly Sins, and the Seven Virtues, and the Ten Commandments, and the Twelve Articles of thy faith, and the Seven Sacraments of Holy Church, and the Seven Gifts of the Holy Ghost, and the Seven Works of mercy, and the Seven Virtues of the Gospel, and the Seven prayers of the Paternoster.

(viii.) These are the seven deadly sins : Pride and Envy, Ire, Sloth, Covetousness, Gluttony and Lust.[1]

[1] The text includes changes from the original. In the Vernon (Somerset) MS., the text is mutilated.

Pride is love of unkind exaltation, and from it come these seven; disobedience[1] against God or against the sovereign, that is to leave undone that which is commanded, and to do that which is forbidden. The tother branch of pride is Presumption, that is, which undertakes things above its powers, or thinks itself wiser than it is, or better than it is, and boasts of good coming from others, or of evil arising from itself. The third branch of pride is Hypocrisy, that is when he feigns himself to have goodness that he has not: and hides the wickedness that he has. The fourth branch of Pride is contempt for thine even-christian, that is when a man belittles the goodness of another, so that he himself may seem the better. The fifth branch is Arrogance, that is when a man compares his own wickedness and other men's wickedness, so that his own may seem the less. The sixth branch of Pride is Shamelessness, that is when men have no shame for open ill deeds. The seventh branch of pride is Elation, that is when a man has so high a heart that he will suffer no fellow nor master. Dear friend, thou shalt wit that there are three things whereof a man prides himself; that is to say of the goods he has of his nature, as fairness, or strength, or good wit, or noble kindred. The tother thing is what a man has by purchase, as knowledge, favour, good reputation or dignity or office. The third thing is earthly things or earthly goods, as clothing, housing, rents, possessions, household, riding-horses and honour of this

[1] "Unbuxomness," *i.e.*, being inflexible.

world.[1] Pride makes a man to be of a great and high heart, to despise his even-christians, and to desire place and mastery over others.[1]

The second deadly sin is Envy. And that is joy over other men's harms, and sorrow over other men's welfare. That may be in the heart as pleasure, or in the mouth with backbiting, or in deed, by withdrawing men's goods, or else by procuring their evil.[1] Envy makes men to have a heavy heart, because he sees other men more worthy in something than himself.[1] The third deadly sin is Wrath, which is an irrational temper of the heart: of it come strifes and contests, shameful and quarrelsome words, and scornfulness, and wicked slanders. The fourth deadly sin is Sloth, and that makes a man's heart heavy and slow in good deeds, and makes a man find prayer and holiness irksome, and puts man into the sin of despair; for it slacks down the delights of ghostly love. The fifth deadly sin is Covetousness, and that is to have an unmeasured love of earthly goods, and it destroys and blinds man's heart. And thereof come treasons, false oaths, wicked restlessness, malice and hardness of heart against mercifulness. The sixth deadly sin is Gluttony, and that makes a man serve and be obedient to wicked pleasures of the flesh, the which, within measure, a man should master and overcome. Of Gluttony come vain joy, lightness and small understanding. The seventh

[1]···[1] These sentences are not in S. Edmund's *Speculum*, nor in the Vernon MS. They are presumably the Translator's additions.

deadly sin is Lust, and that makes a man's heart melt, and play there wherever his heart likes and keeps, and all that without reason governing. From Lust, come blindness of heart, unstableness and over-hastiness in prayer, love of self, hatred of God, love of this world, horrors and despair of the bliss of heaven. Dear friend, these are the seven deadly sins, and well are they called deadly sins, for Pride separates his God from man, Envy his even-christian, Ire divides him against himself, Sloth torments him, Covetousness beguiles him,[1] Gluttony deceives him, and Lust sets him in thraldom.[2]

(x). Now hast thou heard the seven sicknesses of man's soul. Then afterwards comes the sovereign Leech, and takes these medicines and heals man of these seven sicknesses, and stables him in the seven virtues, through the gifts of the Holy Ghost. The which are these: The spirit of wisdom and understanding; the spirit of counsel and of stalwartness, the spirit of knowledge and of pity, and the spirit of fear of God Almighty. Through these gifts our Lord Jesus teaches man all that he has need of; in the life which is called active, and the life called contemplative. And see how: first, man should leave the evil and do the good: the spirit of fear of Almighty God teaches us to leave the evil; and the spirit of pity teaches us to do good. And because there are two

[1] In the *Speculum* "overthrows."

[2] Chapter ix. is missing from the MS. Thornton. The Somerset version gives this chapter, which applies the Beatitudes of the Gospel to the Seven Deadly Sins.

things that hinder us from doing good, that is to say the well-being and the tribulation of the world; for well-being deceives us with flattery, tribulation with the hardness of annoyances and diseases: therefore, thou shalt despise this world's well-being in order that thou beest not deceived therewith; and the spirit of knowledge teaches thee that; and thou shalt stalwarthy suffer tribulation so that thou beest not overcome, and that the spirit of stalwartness teaches thee. And these four suffice to the life which is called active. And the tother three fall to that life which is called contemplative, for there are three sorts of contemplation. One is in creatures, which the spirit of understanding teaches. The second is in Holy Writ, wherein thou seest what thou shalt do and what thou shalt leave, and that the spirit of counsel teaches. The third manner is in God Himself, and that the spirit of wisdom teaches thee. Now, through the gifts of Jesus, thou dost see how busy He is about our Salvation.

(xi.) After this thou shalt wit which are the Ten Commandments. The first commandment is this, "Thou shalt worship but one God, thy Lord, and Him only shalt thou serve." That is to say, worship Him with honest truth, serve Him only with good works. Here shalt thou think if thou hast loyally served God and worshipped God; if thou hast served Him above all things, if thou hast yielded to Him that which thou didst promise, if thou hast done loyal penance, and if thou hast yielded

Him that which thou didst promise at thy baptism, that was, to forsake the devil, and all his works, and to believe loyally in God. And through this commandment man is directed concerning God the Father. In the second commandment he is forbidden to take God's name in vain; lying and falseness are forbidden therein: and through this commandment man is directed concerning God the Son, Who Himself says "I am the Truth." The third commandment, is "remember thee that thou keepest thine holy-days;" that is to say to keep thyself in rest and peace in thine own heart, without service of sin or of bodily deeds.[1] And this commandment orders man to receive the Holy Ghost. These three commandments teach man how he shall bear himself towards God the Trinity, in Whose likeness his soul was made. The other seven commandments teach man how he shall bear himself towards his even-christian. The first is, "Thou shalt honour thy father and thy mother," fleshly and ghostly, and that in two ways: that is to say, thou shall be buxom to them in reverence

[1] The parallel passage in the Vernon MS. has great interest for some of us; among other things it suggests the somewhat enervating influence which is sometimes ascribed to the West Country:—"The third commandment is that Man shall hallow his holy-day: devoutly hearing, without chattering, Mass and Matins and other hours; and not omitting to rise for any cold, or sleepiness or sweat—for the more grief a man has at rising, the more shall his praise be if he do rise; and when thou art at thy meat, of such good things as God has lent thee give blithely to the poor thereof; and after meat, thank God for all His good gifts: and afterwards, go not to the tavern, nor to wrestlings, nor to carollings, nor to other empty plays of vanity; for of such plays often come mishaps and deadly sins."

and honour, and that thou shalt help them, within thy power, in all things they have need of. " So that thou shalt be long-lived on earth." For if thou wilt be of long life, it is reasonable that thou shouldest honour them from whom thou hadst thy life ; for he who will not honour him through whom he is, it is not right that he should be, any more. The tother commandment is " Thou shalt slay no man." Here thou shalt wit that slaughter is of many kinds ; for there is manslaughter by hand, by tongue, by heart. Man-slaying by hand is when a man slays another with his hands, or when he does him in death-bands,[1] as in prison, or in another place which may be the occasion of his death. Man-slaying by tongue is of two kinds, through commandment, or through enticement. Man-slaying in heart is also of two kinds, that is when a man desires and covets the death of another, and when he suffers a man to die and will not deliver him, if he has the power. The third commandment is this, " Thou shalt do no adultery." And that is right : whosoever will have life without corruption in the Joy of Heaven, it behoves him to keep his life which dies, without corruption of body. The fourth commandment is this : " Thou shalt do no theft, nor any falseness." And that is right ; for he that will save another man's life, he shall not do away with that which might sustain his life. The fifth commandment is this : " Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy even-christian," with him who

[1] *Speculum : in loco mortis :* the Vernon MS. " in the place of slaying."

desires to annoy or slay him. And that is right; for he that will not scathe his even-christian, he shall not consent nor give any counsel to do him ill. The sixth commandment and the seventh are these: "Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's wife." "Nor shalt thou covet his house nor none of his goods unjustly." For he that has a wicked will and ill intention in his heart, he cannot long withhold himself from the wicked deed: and, therefore, if thou wilt not do adultery, thou shalt not consent to man or woman who does it: and if thou wilt not steal thou shalt not covet other men's things in thy heart. Dear friend, these are the ten commandments which God gave to Moses in the Mount of Sinai. The three first pertain to the love of God, and the tother seven to the love of thyself and of thine even-christian.

(xii.) Now, after this, thou shalt wit which are the seven virtues: that is to say Truth, Trust and Love, Wisdom and Righteousness, Measure and Force.[1] The seven Virtues are of the same matter as the Ten commandments; but this is the difference between them: the ten commandments make us know what we shall do, and the seven virtues make us know how we shall do. The three first, that is to say, Truth, Trust and Love, order thee how thou shalt live as to God, the tother four how thou shalt ordain thine own life that shall lead thee to the Joy of Heaven. Dear friend, thou oughtest to wit

[1] The Vernon MS. gives the Seven Virtues thus:—Belief: Hope: Love: Wisdom (or Skill): Justice: Strength: Temperance.

that we are all made for one end, that is to say, to know God, to have Him and to love Him. But these things are needful to bring our coming to a good end : that is, to wit whither we shall go, and that we will to come thither, and that we have confidence in coming thither ; for it were a great folly to begin a thing which a man cannot finish. Yet, on the tother side, the man that wishes to do well, he needs to have wisdom, might and will, that is to say that he knows how to do well, and that he can and will do well. But because we have neither knowledge, might, nor will of ourselves, therefore has God given us truth to fill up the default of our knowledge ; Trust to fill up the default of our might : soothfast love to ordain our will to the one and to the other. Truth appoints us to God the Son, to whom Wisdom is appropriated : Trust to God the Father to Whom Might is appropriated ; Love to the Holy Ghost to Whom goodness is appropriated. And, therefore, Truth makes us to have knowledge ; and that knowledge tells us that He is wonderfully free who on this manner and thus largely gives of His goodness, and from that Trust comes ; and from that knowing which says that He is good, comes the third, soothfastness, that is Love, for everything loves Goodness heartily.

(xiii.) Dear friend, here shalt thou wit which are the twelve articles of the Faith. The first is this : that God is One in Himself, and Three in Persons, without beginning and without ending ; and Who made all things out of nothing by His Word. The second article is :

That God's Son took flesh and blood of the Blessed Maiden, Mary, and was born of her soothfast God and soothfast Man. The third is, that He was dead and put in the grave, not for necessity but of His own free will to buy us. The fourth article is, that this same Jesus rose from death to life, and we shall rise also. The fifth article is, that the same soothfast God and Man ascended up into Heaven in manhood and Godhead, and we shall ascend up also through His Grace.[1]

(xiv.) The sixth article is Baptism, that makes a man clean from the sin that he draws from nature, and gives grace to cleanse him. The seventh article is Confirmation, that confirms the Holy Ghost on a man who is christened. The eighth article is Penance, that does away all manner of sin, deadly and venial. The ninth is the Sacrament of the Altar, that strengthens the penitent, and gives him strength so that he falls not afterwards into sin, and upholds him and reconciles him. The tenth article is Orders, that give power to them who are ordained to do their office and to do the sacraments. The eleventh article is Matrimony that forbids deadly sin in the work of generation between man and woman. The twelfth article is Anointing, so that men anoint the sick who are in peril of death, for the relief of body and soul.

[1] Here the Vernon MS. puts in an explanatory sentence:—"The seven that come after are the seven Sacraments of Holy Church, that are remedies to men for all manner of sins," and then follows the list of them.

(xv.) Dear friend, afterwards thou shalt wit which are the four Cardinal Virtues ; through which all man's life in this world is governed. They are, Knowledge, Righteousness, Force and Measure. Of these four, the Holy Ghost says in the Book of Wisdom that there is nothing on the earth more profitable to man.[1] And see now, wherefore. Whoso would do anything well, it behoves him first that he knows how to choose the ill from the good, and of two goods to choose the better ; and this virtue is called knowledge. So then, thou shalt leave the ill and do the good ; and do the greater good and leave the less good : and this is the Virtue that is called righteousness. And because two things hinder man from doing well and leaving the ill, that is to say the welfare of this world, because it deceives him with false vanities, and the other is tribulation to crush him down with many sharpnesses ; therefore against welfare thou shalt have measure,[2] that thou be not over-high ; and this virtue is called temperance. And against adversity thou shalt have hardness, that thou beest not cast down ; and that virtue is called force or strength.

(xvi.) Hereafter, thou shalt wit which are the seven works of mercy. The first work of mercy is to give meat

[1] "And if a man love righteousness, her labours are virtues : for she teacheth temperance and prudence, justice and fortitude ; which are such things as men can have nothing more profitable in their life." (Wisdom viii. 7.)

[2] *i.e.*, moderation.

to the hungry. The second is to give drink to the thirsty. The third is to clothe the naked. The fourth is to harbour the shelterless. The fifth is to visit them that are in prison. The sixth is to comfort the sick. The seventh is to bury the dead. These are the seven works of mercy belonging to the body. But now thou mayest say to me, " how should I who am in Religion, and have nought to give to eat nor to drink, nor clothes to the naked, nor shelter to the harbourless, because I am at other men's will, and not at my own ? therefore it were better that I were secular, that I might do these works of mercy." Ah, dear friend, be not beguiled. Better is it to have pity and compassion in thine heart for him who has trouble and wretchedness, than if thou hadst all this world to give in charity : for it is better to give thyself as thou art with compassion, than it is to give what thou hast. Therefore, dear friend, give thyself : and then thou givest more than is in all this world. But now, thou mayest say to me on this manner : " Sooth it is that it is better to give himself than to give that which is his ; but better is the one and the other than is one by itself ; for one good is less than two." It is not so ; for whether is better, to be called God, or His servant ? Thou wottest well it is better to be called God. But thou that sufferest hunger, thirst, cold and want, and other wretchednesses and discomforts, our Lord Jesus Christ calls " himself ; " for He says thus in the Gospel : " What thou didst to the least of Mine,

thou didst to Me."[1] . . . . S. Bernard says, " The poor have nought on earth, neither have the Rich ought in heaven; therefore, if the Rich will have it, it behoves them to buy from the poor." Now wot I well that thou dost covet to wit, which are verily poor, and which are not. Now listen with devotion. Some there are who have riches and love them, and these are the grasping and the covetous of this world. Others there are who have them not, but they love them, and they gladly would have them, and these are the world's wretched beggars, and the false folk in religion; and these are, in will, as rich as and richer than the others. And of them, Jesus said in the Gospel, " Lighter were it for a camel to pass through a needle's eye, than (for) the rich to come into the bliss of Heaven." Some there are who have riches and love them not, although they will possess them well; and these are the world's good men, who spend well what they have. But few there are of these! Yet again, there are others who have no riches, and love them not, nor will to have them, and these are the good folk that are in

[1] The part omitted here, runs thus in the Somerset Vernon MS. version :—" On the other side, which is better; to judge or to be judged? Certainly, to judge. And that the poor shall do: they shall judge the rich: as Jesus says in the Gospel: ' Ye that have forsaken all things for the love of Me, at the Day of Doom when I sit in the see of My majesty, then shall ye sit upon the twelve thrones and judge the twelve lineages of Israel.' On the other side: whether is better, to have the Joy of Heaven in possession, or in promising? Certainly, in possession. And that the poor in spirit have; for, as Jesus says in the Gospel, ' theirs is the Joy of Heaven? He says not ' theirs shall be,' but ' theirs is :' that is to be understood, the poor must be as sure of the Joy of Heaven as a man is of a thing that is in his hands."

religion ; and these are soothfastly poor, and theirs is the Joy of Heaven, for that is the benison of the poor. Then, it behoves that the rich must have the reverse of that benison ; and therefore can I say, " Blessed are the poor for theirs is the kingdom and the Joy of Heaven." And thus may I say of the rich, for theirs is the pain of hell. Also they are poor who have poverty and love not riches ; and poor are they who have riches and love poverty.

(xvii.) Now, after this, thou oughtest to know which are the seven prayers of the Paternoster, that do away with all ill and which purchase all good. And those seven prayers are contained in the Paternoster which our Lord Jesus Christ taught to His disciples, how they should pray to God the Father, and said to them on this manner : " When ye shall pray, on this wise shall ye pray : *Pater noster qui es in celis*, etc."[1] Now, my friend, wit thou that our Lord Jesus Christ teaches us in the Gospel to make this prayer. And therefore I would that thou shouldest know at the beginning what prayer or orison is, and afterwards that thou shouldest understand the Paternoster prayer. Prayer or Orison is nought else but the soul's yearning, with certain trust that what thou prayest for comes. And in that trust, Jesus Christ sets

[1] A long passage, which now follows, is not in the *Speculum*, nor in the Vernon MS. The latter gives the Paternoster clause by clause, first in Latin, and then in English. If this passage interpolated into the *Speculum* is Rolle's, and also the Tract on Prayer (a rendering of which is included in this book) then we have the interesting fact of the one giving the penitent's aspect of prayer, the other the joyous aspect.

us when He teaches us to call God, "our Father that is in heaven:" for in Him a man shall have certain trust that He can and will give all goodness that our soul can desire, and much more; the which is betokened by these words: *Qui es in celis*, that is to say "which is in Heaven." For if God will call Himself our Father, then he makes us to wit that He loves us as children, and that He will give us all that we have need of. But certainly, if all the love that ever father or mother had to their children, and all other loves of the world, were gathered together in one love, and still that love were multiplied as much as man's heart could think, yet it could not at all reach to that love, that God our Father has unto us, there where we are His enemies. And that, through the grace of God shall we well see, if we see on what manner He is our Father, and what He has done for us. Wit thou that when God made all creatures out of nought, we read not that He made any creature in His own likeness but man alone; and, therefore, He is the God and Maker of all things in the world, but He is not their Father; but unto us, through His own might, full of mercy, is He God, and Maker and Father; because our soul is faithfully like the likeness of the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Ghost, who are altogether one God in Three Persons. And He has made all this world to serve man, while man will dwell in loyal love to Him as His own children. But as soon as we turn from that loyal love, out of love for this life or any other thing, we lose the lordship of this world, and drearily become thralls to the devil, where before we were free,

and heirs of the heritage of the kingdom of heaven, and wielding the wealth of this world. Alas ! (I may say) Alas, Alas, what a sorrowful change is here to whomsoever can understand it. Wit thou well that here is great liking of love—when God, Who is without beginning, and is without changing, and dwells without ending, because He is All-mightiest, and All-wisest, and also All-Best, that man's heart can think of, in Whom is Love and endless Joy—here, I say, is a token of great love, that He deigned to make us in His own likeness, right as if we had been His own chosen children, when He might have left us to be a little vile matter that is vile to name, as we were made of our mother ; or He might have made us, at His will, like any kind of other beasts, and then we should have died both soul and body together. But when He had made us man, and given us a soul in His own likeness—praised and loved be that Lord !—to be heirs of the heritage of Heaven and to live in that great joy without end, now, there is no heart so hard that it must not melt and love such a God with all its might ; and his heart filled with Joy, should melt, if it soothly thought of that grace which our Lord has done to us above all other creatures. And yet, through His great mercy, He did more—For when, through our sorrowful sin, we were separated from God our sweetest Father, and had become thralls to the ill spirit, then He, through His utmost mercy, sent His own Son, Who is with Him in His Godhead, to take flesh and blood of the Virgin Mary, Maiden and Mother, for lasting Joy : and on this

manner He did that deed. In the state of a thrall, He, that never did ill nor any manner of sin, took our flesh, to suffer the worst poverty and shame, and injury and pains; and afterwards gave Himself up to the vilest and shamefullest death men could think of; to deliver us wretches from bonds of misery, and from being put in the pain and prison of hell; and to make us come to high Heaven where we all shall be Kings crowned in bliss, if we do the will of that sweet Lord, Who appointed Him to die for us on the cross, as though He had been a wicked thief. Dear friend, now hast thou here two things in the which God has shewed us that He is our Father, and that He loves us as His own children, though we were against Him with our wicked sin. The first is that He made us in His own likeness, the second is that He bought us out of prison with the death of His precious Manhood. For the first, man is bound to Him to love Him with all his heart. But then mayst thou ask, "What shall I do for Him for the second thing; for if, with all powerfulness, I love God the Father, and love Him and serve Him with all my soul and with all my heart, in all things, and because He made me out of nought, and gave me a soul after His own likeness, just as it was commanded in the Old Law before God was born and became Man for us; what must I do for Him when for me, a wretched sinner, He so lowered Himself that He would become Man, and gave Himself to me, when through His sweetest mercy He willed to die for me, and that by the most

injurious and most vile death that ever was thought of? I wot noways what I can say here, for if I might live a hundred years, and if, in that time, I might every day at a time, die as vile a death as He did for me, yet it were nothing beside His great gift, when He, truly called God's Son of heaven, gave Himself to us, who through sin were lost, and put into the pain of hell, and there, having scorned Him, served the devil. How then can we yield Him any good great gift, when He sent His own Son to be tormented for our sins?" Now, if God gives me grace, I shall teach thee how our dear Father asks for no other gift save that with our heart we should know our own feebleness and our wretchedness that we have through our own sin. Then shall we be in bitterness of penitence and cry to Him fast for mercy, that He, for His Holy Name, save us, for of ourselves have we nought to give Him. Therefore, the prophet said in the psalm, *Quid retribuam domino pro omnibus que retribuit michi? Calicem salutaris accipiam et nomen domini invocabo*, etc." that is, "What shall I yield to God for all His good gifts, that He, as Lord, gives me without my deserving? The Cup of Health I shall take, and call on the Name of my Lord." The Cup of Health, whereof our Saviour our Lord Jesus Christ drank, that is the bitterness of the penance in His great pains; and that man, who soothfastly knows that of himself he has nought but sorrow and sin calls upon God's Name.

And wit thou, that if soothfastness be set fast in thy soul, the more that thou knowest thyself to be wretched

and feeble, the more wilt thou meek thyself and call on His mercy. And so it was with our sweet Lady, Maiden and Mother, for she had more of grace than any man or woman who ever was born into this life; therefore, she thought herself less and lower than any other wight, and she cried for mercy more than any other man, when the true Son of God descended into her womb.

My dear friend, see now next why our Lord Jesus teaches us in the Gospel to say "Our Father" and not "My Father." For by that, He will show us that we should gather all men with us in our prayers; for all, christened and unchristened, men are our brothers, for that we all have the governing of our Father; and that thou mayst, through the grace of God, see this thing clearly, give good attention to what I am going to say. Thou callest him that has his body from the same man and woman that thou hast, thy fleshly brother; then shalt thou well hold him thy brother who has his soul from the same Father of Heaven from Whom thou hast thy soul, and of such a kind, and of such a likeness; for God made every man in the likeness of the Trinity as well as thyself; and we should love this brotherhood and hold it more dear than the brotherhood of the flesh; inasmuch as the soul is more noble than the flesh, and inasmuch as God our Father in Heaven is more noble and to be loved than our fleshly father. And we should do that if we saw as clearly with our ghostly eye as with our bodily eye. But because we see nought save with the fleshly eye, as if it were beasts, we have no knowing

nor love save for that that comes of the stinking and foul flesh. Alas! alas! what pitiful thing has thus blinded us? Certainly, nothing more blinds a man's soul than love of those earthly things which so soon take their End. Therefore, it behoves a man to give up his own will if he will know that lovesomest brotherhood whereof I have much spoken now; for whatsoever of goodness or fairness we have of body or soul, we have it from our Father in Heaven, God, Who is a Father to us and evenly to all His creatures; not only for His creating them out of nought, nor for His governing by His grace, but for His purchasing that He made of us who were lost children, with His flesh and His blood that He gave for us, as the noble clerk, S. Austin, witnesses. He says, "The Father gave His Son, through Whom He would buy us thralls; He gave the Holy Ghost through Whom He would purchase the thralls His children. He gave the Son in price of ransom, the Holy Ghost in privilege of purchase: and therefore, the Father keeps a heritage for Himself in the children He bought." And therefore, dear friend, no man can mistrust the love of His sweet Fatherhood or of His dear pity; for His mercy is more that all our wickedness; for whosoever calls to Him with all his heart, without fail He will hear him, for He is full of mercy. And therefore, as I said before, with yearning of soul and certain trust, call upon Him truly with all thine heart. He is thy peerless Father, Who purchased peace for thee; and say trustingly to Him, Who Himself taught us: *Pater noster qui es in celis*, that is to say, "Our Father that

is in Heaven ; " *sanctificetur nomen tuum*, that is to say, " hallowed by Thy Name ; " *adueniat regnum tuum*, " it come thy kingdom ; " *ffiat voluntas tua sicut in celo et in terra* ; " Thy will be done, so in earth as it is in Heaven ;" *panem nostrum cotidianum da nobis hodie*, " our everyday bread do Thou give us to-day ; " *et dimitte nobis debita nostra sicut et nos dimittimus debitoribus nostris*, " and forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors ; " *et ne nos inducas in temptacionem*, " and suffer us not to be led into temptations ; " *set libera nos a malo*, " but deliver us from all ill things." *Amen*, that is to say, " So may it be."[1]

Now, my dear friend, thou shalt wit that this Orison surpasses all other prayers principally in two things ; that is to say in value, and in profitableness. In worth, because God Himself made it : and, therefore, they do great dishonour and irreverence to Jesus, God's Son, who betake themselves to riming and curious words, and leave the prayer that He taught us, Who knew the whole will of God the Father, and which orison comes most to His liking and what things a wretched caitiff has need to pray for. Also, as I have said, only He knows all the Father's will, and He knows all our need. Wherefore a hundred thousand are deceived with the multiplication of orisons and words ; for when they ween that they have

[1] At this point, the writer resumes his rendering of the *Speculum*. Rolle was a scholar, and the unusal spelling of some Latin words may be due to the scribe. The MS. admittedly contains blunders.

great devotion then have they foul fleshly pleasure, because that sort of fleshly pleasure naturally delights them in such turned language; and therefore I would that thou wast wary, for I tell thee truly it is foul sensuality to delight thyself in rimes and such buffoonery. Yet, on the other side, S. Austin and S. Gregory and other Hallows, prayed as their liking was. I blame not their prayers; but I blame those who leave out God's prayer which He made and taught us to pray, that is the Paternoster, and betake themselves to the Orisons of a sinful Saint, wherever they find it written; for our Lord Jesus Christ Himself says in the Gospel, "when ye will pray, pray not with many words, but pray on this manner, *Pater noster*, etc."

Dear friend, yet shalt thou wit on the other side, that the *Paternoster* surpasses all other prayers in sufficiency: for therein all things are contained, whatsoever we have need of, for this life or for tother; for therein we pray God the Father that He will deliver us from all ills, and that He will give us all goods: and that He will make us such that we shall never do ill, and so that we may never fail of good. And see now, all the ill that grieves us, either it is ill which is over and done, or it is ill to come, or else it is ill that we suffer now. For that ill which is over and done, we pray our sweet Lord that He will deliver us therefrom when we say *et ne nos inducas in temptacionem*. From ills that we suffer now, we pray Him that He will deliver us when we say *set libera nos a*

malo. Yet, dear friend, on another side, wit thou that all manner of good that is, either it is earthly good, or ghostly good, or good lasting endlessly ; for earthly good we pray when we say *panem nostrum cotidianum da nobis hodie* ; for ghostly good we pray when we say *ffiat voluntas tua sicut in celo et in terra ;* for endless good we pray when we say *adueniat regnum tuum ;* and confirming all this we pray when we say *sanctificetur nomen tuum.*

Now, my dear friend, there are seven prayers of the Gospel which our Lord Jesus Christ taught to His disciples. And thou shalt wit that these four words that come before to wit *Pater noster qui es in celis* teach us how we shall pray, and what our own self should be in prayer. For in every Orison we shall have four things : that is, perfect love to Him to Whom we pray and certain trust to have that we pray for, and stable faith in Him in Whom we believe, and soothfast meekness because of ourselves we have no good. Perfect love is understanding of this word *Pater,* for every creature naturally loves His Father. Certain trust is contained in this word *noster,* for if He be ours, then may we certainly trust in Him that He is holding to us. Stable faith is taken in these words *Qui es,* for when we say *qui es,* then we well admit that God is what we have never seen, and that is right-faith, for faith is no other thing but believing a thing that cannot be seen. Soothfast meekness is betokened in this word, *In celis,* for when we think how high He is in Joy, and how low we are here in cares, then are we meeked. And when

we have fastened these four things in our hearts, then may we boldly pray and say with all our affection, *Sanctificetur nomen tuum*, that is to say " holy be Thy Name," as though that is, stable Thy Name Father in us, that we may be Thy Children in that manner that we do nothing that is against Thy will, and that evermore we do that that comes to Thy pleasure, through the granting of Thy grace. And because we cannot evermore do that perfectly whilst we are in this world, rendered wretched, therefore pray we thus and say *Adueniat regnum tuum*, that is to say " let Thy Kingdom come to us, so that we reign in Thee, Jesus ; in this life through Thy grace, and Thou in us in the tother life through Joy.

And this same we pray for those who are in Purgatory. And because we can never more have part in the Joy of Heaven if we do not Thy will in earth, therefore we pray thus : *Fiat voluntas tua sicut in celo et in terra*, that is to say, " Thy will be done as in Heaven so on earth ; as we say, make us to do Thy will, that is to say, do Thou give us grace to do all that Thou commandest, and to leave all that Thou dost forbid : and that so in earth as in Heaven, that is to say as Michael, and Gabriel and Raphael, Cherubim and Seraphim, and all the other angels and archangels, ... and all those who are appointed to the endless life in Joy, in every Land, in every Order, and in every Age, do Thy will. And because we cannot do Thy will whilst we live in this body, if Thou do not sustain us, therefore we say thus :—*Panem nostrum*

cotidianum da nobis hodie, that is to say, " Our every-day bread give Thou us to-day ; " so as to say, Give Thou us strength in body and in soul, and health, if it be Thy will, of the one and of the other. And here it is to be known that there are three kinds of bread ; there is bodily bread, that is to say food and clothing ; there is ghostly bread, that is to say the teaching of Holy Writ, and there is the bread of the Eucharist, that is the grace in the sacrament of the Altar, for to comfort the nature of the one and of the other. But because we are worthy of no goodness whilst we are bounden in sin, therefore say we thus ; " *Dimitte nos debita nostra sicut et nos dimittimus debitoribus nostris*, this is to say, " Forgive us our debts as we forget our debtors." Thou shalt wit where our sins bind our debtors to torment ; therefore we pray Jesus to forgive us sins, that is to say all that we have sinned in thought, word and deed, and that just as we forgive to those who have mis-done against us. And because, if we cannot keep ourselves from sin, a little helps us to have forgiveness of sin, therefore we pray thus : *Et ne nos inducas in temptacionem*, and this is to say, " lead us not into any temptation ; " as though to say, suffer us not to be overcome in temptations of the devil, nor of the flesh, nor of the world. And not alonely do we pray that we may be delivered from all evil temptations, but also we pray that we may be delivered from all ill things ; when we say *Set libera nos a malo*, and this is to say, " But deliver us from all ill things," that is of body and of soul, of sin, and of pain for sin, that is now, or shall be. We say

Amen, that is So be it! And therefore, our Lord Jesus Christ says in the Gospel, " whatsoever thou prayest my Father, in My Name, He shall do it," and therefore say at the end, *Per dominium nostrum Jesum Christum filium tuum, etc.*

And now my dear friend, understand not that thou shalt say thy *Paternoster* with thy mouth as I have written it here before thee. But say all alonely the naked letter with thy mouth, and in thy heart think of this that I have said here; of each word by itself; and reck not if thou dost not multiply many *Pater nosters;* for it is better to say one *Pater noster* with good devotion than a thousand without devotion; for S. Paul says thus openly: he says: " I were liefer to say five words devoutly in my heart, than with my mouth five thousand without caring." And in the same manner shalt thou say and do at thine office in the Choir, for so says the prophet: *Psallite sapienter*, and that is to say, " Sing and say versicles wisely." To say or to sing wisely that is that thine heart be at one with what thou sayest, and at one with that another sayest, that thou hear it busily; for if thy body be at thy service, and thy mouth speak on one wise, and thy heart think of wretchedness, miserably then art thou divided; and when thou art so divided, thou dost lose the reward of thy service, for thou oughtest to serve God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy valour, and so thou mayest repay thy God.

But there are many things that are the cause of such wretched division, as meat, drink, rest, clothing, want,

discord, thought, labour, contempt. This leads to skipping, and a murmuring of muddled chatter[1]. Therefore take heed what our Lord Jesus Christ says in the Gospel: He says, "First seek the Kindgom of Heaven, and all that ye have need of shall be given you without any asking." Therefore, dear friend, thou shalt wit what thou shalt have in the bliss of Heaven.

(xviii.) Wit thou well that thou shalt have seven gifts in body and seven in soul, that is to say, Fairness in body without filth, Lightness without sloth, Force without feebleness, Freedom without thralldom, Pleasure without annoyance, Loveliness without envy, Health without sickness, Long Life without end. Thou shalt have in soul, Wisdom without ignorance, Friendships without hating, Accord without discord, Might without weakness, Honour without dishonour, Sickness without fear, Joy without sorrow. But the wretches in hell, all the reverse, both in body and soul, that is to say: Filth without fairness, Sloth without lightness, Feebleness without force, Thralldom without freedom, Anguish without pleasure, Sickness without health, Death without end. There shall be in their souls, Ignorance without wisdom, Hatred without love, Discord without accord, Feebleness without power, Shame without honour, Dread without security, and Sorrow without joy. And for this thou shalt seek with all thy might that thou mayst win the Joy of heaven;

[1] This sentence, not easy to render in modern English, is not to be found in the Latin original.

for there is so great Joy and so much sweetness, that if thou mightest live from the beginning of the world until the end, and have all the pleasure that thou couldest order, yet thou shouldest very rightly leave all those to be one day in the Joy of heaven.

And thus ends the second degree of Contemplation, that is to say the Contemplation of Holy Writ, of the which if thou takest good care in thine heart, every word of it shall be light unto thee to hold. On another side, thou has wherewith to speak unto clerks, be they never so wise, and unto ignorant men be they never so untaught. To clerks thou mayest propose some of these matters, and ask that thou mayst learn more. And when thou speakest to simple and untaught men, gladly shouldest thou teach them and with sweetness. For thou hast enough whereof thou mayst speak, and how thou shalt amend and govern thy life, and other men's too.

(xix.) The third degree of contemplation is in God Himself. And that may be on two manners, that is, outwardly in His Manhood, and inwardly in His so blessed Godhead. For thus says S. Austin "for this God became Man, to make man see God in His nature; for whether he went within or without, man might evermore find pasture; without by consideration of His Manhood, within through contemplation of His Godhead." Of His Manhood shalt thou think three things: the meekness of His Incarnation; the sweetness of His

conversation, and the great charity of His Passion. But this, thou canst not do all at once; and, therefore, have I separated them for thee by the seven Hours of the day that thou sayst in Church, so that no hour passes that thou art not sweetly occupied in thy heart. But now to do this, then shall thou wit that to each hour of the day belongs a double meditation, one of His Passion, another of the season.

(xx.) Now, dear friend, before Matins, thou shalt think, at the first, of the sweet birth of Jesus Christ, and then afterwards of His Passion. Concerning His birth, thou shalt think busily of the time and the place and the hour that our Lord Jesus Christ was born of His Mother Mary. The time was in mid-winter, when it was most cold; the hour was at midnight, the hardest hour that is, the place was mid-ward in the street, in a house without walls; in clouts was He wound, like a child was He bound, and in a Crib, before an Ox and an Ass that lovely Lord was laid, for there was no other place void. And here shalt thou think of the keeping of Mary and of her Child, and of her spouse Joseph—what Joy Jesus sent them[1]. Thou shalt think also of the herds who saw the token of His birth, and thou shalt think of the sweet fellowship of angels, and raise up thine heart and sing with them *Gloria in excelsis deo*, etc.

[1] The Somerset Version renders the passage thus :—"Thou shalt think of the busy-ness that Mary had about her Child; of Joseph, her spouse, thou shalt think, how that he had great Joy."

Of the Passion thou shalt think how that He was at the same time of the night betrayed by His disciple, and taken as a traitor, and bound as a thief and led as a felon.

(xxi.) Before Prime thou shalt think of the Passion of Jesus and of His joyful Rising. Of His Passion, thou shalt think how the Jews led Him in to their Council, and bare false witness against Him, and put upon[1] Him that He had said blasphemy,[2] that is slander of God, and that He had said that He could have destroyed the Temple of God, and could make another again within the third day; and then they began to put Him to scorn, and to fool Him as a fool, and contemptuously spit on Him in His fair face ; and they hid His eyes, and gave Him great buffets, and then asked Him who it was that smote Him : and afterwards they led Him drearily to death, and yet never once did He ask them why they did so.

Many other wicked things, which were long to tell, they did to Him. Yet before Prime, thou shalt think of the holy rising : that at that time of the day Jesus joyfully rose from death to life, when he had destroyed hell and delivered holy souls out of the power of the devil[3].

(xxii.) Again, before Terce, thou shalt think of the Passion and of Whitsunday. Of the Passion thou shalt

[1] *i.e.*, accused him of.

[2] The Somerset version deals with the details in the Garden in the section for Matins.

[3] The Original, and also the Somerset Version of the Vernon MS. relate ten of our Lord's Appearances, which are not included in the Thornton MS.

think how at that time our Lord Jesus Christ was contemptuously stripped naked, and bound to a tree in Pilate's house, and so wickedly scourged and struck, that nought was left whole from head to foot of His sweet body[1]. . . . . And at that same hour, thou shalt think of Whitsunday, how at that time of the day our Lord Jesus Christ sent the Holy Ghost to His disciples in the likeness of fire and of tongues, in token that they should have abundance in words, and burning in love ; and that is just the provision our Lord provided ; for in two ways the wicked spirit beguiled man in Paradise, that is to say, with wicked enticement of his tongue, and with the coldness[2] of his venom : and therefore the Holy Ghost came in the likeness of tongues against the enticement of the devil, and in fire to destroy the coldness of his venom.

(xxiii.) Before mid-day shalt thou think of the Annunciation and of the Passion of Jesus. Concerning

[1] The northern rendering omits the sending to Herod, and Pilate's feeble attempt to save our Lord, both of which are included in the Somerset version.

[2] It is interesting to remember that Ireland and the Irish think of the devil and hell in connexion with *cold*. Dr Hyde (*Religious Songs of Connacht*) having rendered an ancient "Night Prayer" from Co. Cork, adds the assurance which belonged to it :—And he who would have this vision, and to say it three times on lying down in his couch of slumber, will receive heaven without foot-moving, and he shall not see cold Hell for ever."

Similarly Joseph Campbell in his Night Prayer—a modern poem of course, but on the ancient lines, cries :

Pray for me, Seachnal,
Pray for me, Mel :
Save me from sin
And the cold stone of hell !

the Annunciation, thou shalt think of the great mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ, and why He would become Man, and in that sweet Manhood suffer death for us, since He might have bought us back again in some other way. And He did that to draw thy love to Him, for if one had been thy Maker and another thy Buyer, and had suffered as it were all our sorrow in His body to buy our love, then our trust would not have been in One only. Concerning the Passion, thou shalt think, how at that hour our Lord Jesus was done on the Cross, betwixt two thieves, one on His right side, and another on His left side, and Himself they hanged betwixt those two, as though He were the Master of thieves. I know not what I can say here ;[1] for if all sickness of this world and all the sorrow were in the body of one only man, and that man could conceive as much annoyance, and anguish and sorrow in his body as all the men of this world could think, yet it were full little, or else nought compared to the sorrow He suffered for us in one hour of the day.[2] . . . . .

(xxiv.) Before None, thou shalt think of the Passion and of the glorious Ascension. Of the Passion, thou shalt think that at that time of day the Maker of Life died for thy love. And here thou shalt think of the words Jesus spake on the Cross, and of the four tokens that befell at His death. The first word that He spake was this : "Father, forgive them this sin, for they wot not what they

[1] Not in the Original.

[2] A long section on our Lord's sufferings, included in the Vernon MS., is left out in the Thornton MS.

do." The second word was this, that He said to the thief: "Forsooth, I say to thee, this day shalt thou be with Me in Paradise." The third was that He said to His Mother, of S. John, His cousin: "Woman, lo! there thy son;" and to the disciple, He said: "Man, lo! there thy Mother." The fourth word He said was this: "God, My God, why hast Thou left Me thus?" The fifth was *Scicio*, that is to say "I have thirst." The sixth word was this: *In manus tuas, domine*, etc., which is to say, "Father, into Thy hands I give My soul." The seventh word was this: *Consummatum est*, that is to say, "Now is the prophecy fulfilled:" and with that word, He held His head down, and gave up the ghost.

Now the tokens, at His death, were these: first, all the earth began to tremble, and the Veil of the Temple burst in two and fell down; the stones tore asunder; the graves opened, and dead men rose; and the sun withdrew his light from the world from mid-day to None.

Of the Ascension, thou shalt think that at that time of the day our Lord Jesus Christ went up in to the Mount of Olives, and, His Mother and His disciples seeing, He ascended to Heaven, and set Himself on His Father's right hand, and how His disciples turned again into the city, and were in fasting and prayer until the coming of the Holy Ghost; and there were together one hundred and twenty in a house, to abide the coming of the Holy Ghost, as our Lord commanded them before.

(xxv.) Before Evensong, thou shalt think of the Passion of Jesus and of His Supper. Concerning the Passion, thou shalt think how Joseph of Arimathæa, purchased from Pilate the body of Jesus, and how they came to the Cross where they hung, and how they broke the two thigh-bones of the two thieves. And there was a knight ready with a spear, and he pierced the side of Jesus, and smote Him to the heart, and at once came running down the precious blood and water. And that was the Ransom of the which I spake before—beloved be that Lord! And then Joseph took Him down from the Cross, because no body might dwell on the Cross on so holy a day as was the morrow.

Of the Supper of Christ, thou shalt think how at that time He gave His precious flesh and His blood in likeness of the bread and the wine that we can see, and it is soothfastly flesh and blood of Jesus Christ which we cannot see with bodily eyes. The third thing is ghostly, the grace that we receive when we take that flesh and that blood. We see, there, likeness of bread and of wine and it is not, but we trow that there is soothfastly the flesh and the blood of Jesus Christ. And nevertheless[1] the

[1] Noght-forthi—nevertheless, is one of Richard Rolle's characteristic words, like his favourite "never-the-latter." Also, in the next sentence vggleness—horror or shuddering, is another word of his. Further, this passage on the Blessed Sacrament is much more drawn out and detailed than in the corresponding section of the Vernon MS., which says tersely "we see and believe ghostly what we cannot see bodily." It seems as if Rolle wished to dwell on the doctrine of the Blessed Sacrament, and also to insist on the necessity for repentance and cleansing, before receiving the Sacrament, a point on which the Vernon MS. is silent.

likeness of flesh we cannot see. And, therefore, because we should have had a shuddering in our body at eating the flesh and drinking the blood of Man, our Lord Jesus Christ turned His flesh and blood into the likeness of bread and wine, to comfort our bodily pain through such food as we are wont to see, and also to help our faith in this that we see one thing and believe another. And, therefore, dear friend, when thou shalt go to receive that sweet flesh and that blood of Jesus thy Saviour, look that thou hast very contrition and repentance and cleansing of thy sin in thy heart, for there thou receivest in the Sacrament just as if thou didst receive Him in flesh and blood, blessed be that grace!

(xxvi.) Before Compline, thou shalt think how Joseph and Nicodemus wound the body of Jesus in fair sheets, and anointed it with precious ointments, and laid it in a monument of stone, and the Jews set their seals upon the stone and knights that should keep it. The tother thing that thou shalt think in the same time is this: how Jesus on the day of the Supper, when He had supped, He went into a garden with His disciples, and fell down in Orison, and began to sweat in such a manner that the drops of blood dropped from His blessed face on to the earth.

(xxvii.) Now hast thou matter and manner to think of God's Manhood. And afterward thou shalt wit how thou shalt think on Him in His high Godhead. To that, thou shalt wit that from the beginning of mankind, God

so measured their knowledge of Him, that He would not shew Himself all wholly to man, nor all wholly conceal Himself from man : for if He had all wholly shewn Himself to man then would faith have been worth nought, and their misbelief would not have been overcome ; for faith is of things that cannot be seen, so that what I see is not faith : and if He had all wholly covered Himself from man, their faith would not have been helped, and misbelief would have been excused, and, therefore, He willed partly to show Himself and partly to hide Himself. But now thou mayst ask me in how many manners He would show Himself. I say in two manners, one within, and another without. Within, He showed Himself through revelation and reason ; without through Holy Writ and through creatures. Through revelation, when He shewed Himself to any folk through inspiration and through miracle. By reason, He comes to man's knowing on this manner : Every man can well see by himself that he is, and that he has been ; but he may well see that he has not always been, and from that he wots well that at some time he began to be; then was there a time when he was not. But when he was not, then he could in no wise make himself. And man sees this in every creature, for every day, he sees some go and some come : therefore, since all things are, and since they are not of themselves, therefore it must needs be that there is One to give all things to be, that is to say of Whom all things are ; therefore it must needs be that He through Whom all things are, is without beginning for if He had beginning, then He must have had

beginning of some other, then He would not have been the first Author and Beginning of all things. But there was nothing before Him; then He came of no other: then had He never any beginning. Therefore it needs must be, in every way, that there should be one thing that never had any beginning. And when man's reason of necessity sees that it cannot be otherwise, then he begins stably to trow that one thing is that was without any beginning, Who is the Author and Maker and Governor of all things that are. And Him men call God for this reason for this word *Deus*, that is to say God, comes from a Greek word that is called *theos*, and that is as much as to say as One Only God. And this word God betokens that.

(xxviii.) And, dear friend, thou oughtest to wit that there is only one God[1] . . . . . Then thou oughtest to know that no good thing can be wanting to God; so because comfort of fellowship is a sweet and good thing, therefore God can not be without goodness of fellowship. Then need were that there should be many persons in God, the highest goodness. And because fellowship can not be betwixt fewer than two, therefore it is necessary that there be in God at least two persons; and because fellowship is little worth where there is no alliance nor love, therefore it behoves that there should be a third person in God, Who should be the alliance and the love betwixt the two. And because One-ness is good, and

[1] The Thornton MS. omits a good deal here.

Many-ness also, therefore needs were that one-ness and many-ness should both be in God. And by this means, man comes to the knowledge of God, that He is God in Himself and in Three Persons. And this same, man may see in himself; for at the beginning, he sees that he has Power in himself, and then after power he has Wisdom. And then he begins to love that Wisdom, and then he begins to know certainly that there is power in the soul, and that wisdom comes of that power, and that Love comes from both; and when man sees that it is so with him, by that he ought to know that in suchlike manner it ought to be with God, Who is above him; that is to say that in God is might, and from that His wisdom comes, and of power and wisdom together comes love. And because from the First Person comes the Second, and out of them both comes the Third, therefore he calls the First Person God the Father, the Second, God the Son, the Third, God the Holy Ghost. And because it was wont to be thus among men, that the father was more feeble than the son on account of his age, and the son more unwise than his father on account of his youth, and in order that a man should not ween that it was so with God; therefore, power is appropriated to God the Father, Wisdom to God the Son; and because this word Ghost sounds somewhat like dreadfulness, therefore sweetness, love and goodness are appropriated to the Holy Ghost. Upon this manner, man comes first to his knowing of God, how He is without beginning, and why He is called God, One in substance and Three in Persons, and why the

First Person is called God the Father, the Second God the Son, the Third God the Holy Ghost; and why power is appropriated to God the Father, and wisdom to God the Son, and goodness to God the Holy Ghost. In such wise shalt thou know thy God.

(xxix.) . . .[1] The first degree of Contemplation is that the soul be led again to itself, and gather itself all together within itself. The second degree is that a man should see what he is, gathered together so. The third degree is that he should lift himself above himself and try painfully to look on his God in His own Nature. But he can never come to the self until he has learned to restrain every bodily imagination, earthly or ghostly, which comes to his own heart, either by hearing, or tasting or swallowing or by any other bodily wit; to refuse it and to tread it under foot, so that he may see the self such as it is without the body. Therefore, dear friend, take good heed how wonderful the soul is in itself, and how it is one in its nature, and yet nevertheless it does different things: for that self sees with its eyes all that thou seest,

[1] The Vernon MS. contains the following omitted in the Thornton:—"Such manner of knowing is the foundation of Contemplation. And, therefore, when thou hast in this manner stabled thine heart in the right faith, and steadfast hope, and perfect love, then thou shalt heave up thine heart in high contemplation of thy Creator. The soul by Contemplation would fain see God in His own nature, but it cannot: and then it turns to its own ways by which it can mount to the Contemplation of God: that he may first see and know his own nature, and after that the Nature that is above him. But if thy thought be spread abroad through worldly thoughts, it can never well seek itself nor its nature; because with as many foul thoughts as it is led by, by so many foul hindrances is it blinded."

hearest with thine ears, swallowest with thy mouth, smellest with thy nose, and also what thou dost touch with all thy members.

Yet, afterwards, think how great thy soul is, so that alonely, with one thought, it can comprehend heaven and earth and all that is in them, if they were a hundred-fold greater than they are or can be. When man's soul is so great and so noble that no creature can understand it perfectly, then great and noble is He Who made so noble a thing out of nothing! He is above all things, and within all things, and without all things, and beneath all things. He is above all things governing all things; beneath all things, bearing up all things; within all things, filling all fully; without all things, going round about all.

Such manner of Contemplation engenders in man steadfast faith and secure devotion.

After this, thou shalt think how great He is; and that mayst thou see in many ways. In the beginning, see how great He is in earthly good, how He gives His goods as well to the evil as to the good, in all things that thou seest on earth. Then afterwards, see how great He is to forgive, for if a man had done Him as much ill as all the men in the world could do, yet should He be more ready a hundred times to forgive him, than that caitiff should be to ask forgiveness of Him.[1]

[1] Here again, the Thornton MS. leaves out a section.

(xxx.) Now, my dear friend if thou livest after this knowledge, then shalt thou live *honourably ;* and that is the first part of our sermon, that I touched on at the beginning.

And after that, thou shalt study to live *lovingly*, as concerns thine even-christians, and unto that shalt thou wholly set thy might, to love and to be loved. Thou shalt love all men in God, that is to say in goodness only, and not for their fairness of body shalt thou love, nor for strength, nor for any other bodily virtue : for they who love in such wise, they love not for God's sake, and to love man in God is no other thing but to love him for anything which cannot be loved without God ; as for goodness or righteousness or for soothfastness.

If we be good, then we have no friends but God, nor any enemy but Ill ; and therefore we shall love those that are good because they are good : in this way thou lovest nothing but goodness, since thou lovest all things for goodness. And if thou wilt be loved, shew thyself lovely. If thou wilt be lovely, receive these three works without forgetting : Do what man bids or prays thee that is good : Take what man gives thee and grudge[1] not : And that which men will say of thee suffer it meekly and be not wroth. If thou livest thus loyally, then livest thou lovelily. Dear sister and friend, then afterwards thou shalt study to live *meekly*. And for this thou shalt know and wit that there are two kinds of meekness. The

[1] Grumble.

one comes from soothfastness, and the tother comes from charity. The first thou mayst have by knowing thyself, for thou canst not in any way of the world see what thou thyself art in soothfastness, if thou beest not meeked. The tother way of meekness thou mayst have, if thou thinkest of the meekness of Jesus Christ, how that He, Who never did any sin, meeked Himself: and such meekness comes purely of charity.

Now, my dear sister and friend, wot thou what it is to live honourably, lovely, and meekly: and that is to live *perfectly*.

Now our sweet Lord Jesus Christ give us grace, so to honour God, and to love our even-Christians, and to meek ourselves, that we may for our honouring be honoured, for our love be loved, and for our meekness be lifted up into the high bliss of Heaven, that Jesus bought for us with His sweet blood and His precious passion. Amen.

Here finishes the Mirror of Holy Edmund Archbishop of Canterbury.

ON PRAYER[1]

PRAYING is a gracious gift of our Lord God, divided to each man as He vouchsafes; to some more delectably, to some less, as all other goods and gifts are given to each man, upon several wise, as the Holy Ghost wills, and principally according to how a man busies himself to get God's grace. The virtue and the sweetness of the Pater noster and of the psalms of the Psalter, and of all other prayers that are prayed inwardly with love and meekness and cleanness of heart, no tongue can tell, heart think, nor eye see. Through the sovereign wisdom and the great grace of the glorious gift of our Lord Jesus Christ, God's Son of Heaven, if they be quietly sung or said in a clean heart with love and meekness and lovely dread in loving God, they bring in to us bright burning beholding mingled with mirth, and strange shining from the highness of heaven, with glittering and gleaming, with mirth and melody; in closing that heart which, without forgetting, loves Jesus Christ, God's Son of Heaven, where the Holy Ghost dwells, bursting baleful bands with the burning of love, there where the high Name of Jesus dwells ever in mind.

[1] The MS. Thornton was copied down about the fourth decade of the fifteenth century by Robert Thornton, who belonged to Rolle's part of Yorkshire. The rendering of S. Edmund's Mirror, and this little work *on Prayer* are both to be found among the unsigned pieces in the MS. Both are believed to be Rolle's; the first a Middle English rendering from S. Edmund's Latin; the second Rolle's own, rhythmical and alliterative as is his habit.

Prayer is a precious pricking in a clean heart, making men mighty, first from earth to air, with a meek heart to behold, ascending on high, climbing to the clouds, piercing all planets that it touches; finding ever further a wonder to feel, and marvel to behold; ever meekly desiring the love of God; privily putting His grace where it pleases Him, and especially to enable them with God's help in all they do; in such wise that with the desire of their hearts they should secretly love Him again.

Perchance, many meek hearts truly loving God in all they can do here, and (who) speak of His love, would fain have some savour or sweetness of it: who for their goodwill and their great desire have it—and much thanks from God for their good will—and know it not; and peradventure if they knew that they had it, they should not bear it so dreadfully,[1] as if they knew it not. And therefore He who knows our wills and our hearts hides it from us, so that we should live in fear, and hold ourselves well paid with whatsoever He sends us, and follow Him fast. And ever the faster that men follow, the more shall men feel of the love of God. But by long time and great travails true love must needs be gotten, and especially by those who have greatly trespassed and over a long time, who feel their conscience unclear for ere-while done deeds, whether they be less or more. And since clearly it may not be gotten without long travail, nor should be felt without cleanness of heart, why should we who are

[1] *i.e.*, with so much fear.

sinful and unclean of heart and have travailed little, wrong-wisely grieve ourselves or grudge with God or with our own self, because we have it not. Wot we not well that God is soothfast and true? How dare we then be wroth because we have not yet that which, for the soothfastness of God and our own fault we are not worthy to have? What shall we do then? Shall we therefore cease, and wax slow, and turn ourselves to sin, and let our hearts die from all good works? No, God forbid: for then were we damnable: but by the grace of God, let us give us stiffly to good works; and we shall wonderfully find that which we knew not how to seek; and graciously see that we never heard say nor never knew. For, it behoves us, needy ones to travail busily if we desire to find love, and they need to travail most who most have trespassed. But commonly, they who have trespassed least are liefest to travail; and they who most have trespassed are often most loth to travail; and may God give to them, who list not to travail, or cannot travail, or have little will to travail; to know that those who love to travail are good, as they who love to travail hold and believe those who will not or cannot travail to be good! For they who love to travail hold and believe those who will not or cannot, good and much better than themselves; for their own self inside their heart they reckon at nought, and at less if they could.

For although love makes them travail, and they trespass every day, yet they think that all others love more

and travail more and trespass less than they; and that makes them think they need to hie faster after, so that they might at the last, if God vouchsafe, have the fortune and grace to come with the hindermost. And thus, they are worthy to go with the front-most.

But sometimes, through the grace of our Lord God it is given sooner to them that have trespassed for a short time, than it is given to them who are clean and without deadly sin, and without privy biting of conscience, who are ever busy to do God's will according to their might, who have ever been thinking somewhat on God with prayer and penance and seeking love. But it is given soonest especially to those who have not lost that thing which is most pleasing to God, by their way of living, that is the flower of their youth, if it be fastened, with all other virtues, within the soul, and grounded chiefly in shamefastness and meekness. They have ever had since they were born the love of God increasing in their heart, who never felt their hearts nor wills fully assenting to lose the purity of their youth when they were tempted: and they little knew how they should love God; nor what, for the love and fear of God and for fear of pain is appointed for sin, nor what for the love of God and for joy in heaven is ordained for those who live cleanly.

But soothly, the heart which would fain feel the silence of love, it needed ever to be cleansed with many salt tears, fasting and watching, praying and thinking,

sorrowing and sighing, and with other small points that pertain to penance, so that no taint nor manner of ill be left in our hearts—other than every-day falling as our frailty requires—for if any say they fall not, they deceive themselves. For they who have any tenderness or fear in the love of God, they fall at a word vainly spoken contrary to the loving of God, unless they be more wary in their speaking, for hurting their heart and conscience; for if it seems little ill, it does great harm. It ever loads a clean heart till it be burned out and with true contrition washed away, and cleansed and lightened with the kindling of love. But they who would fain love God on this wise, it behoves them heartily to beseech and busily pray without any care save what need requires for the weal of the world, and that they make not that need overlarge: and set their mind fully, and without ceasing on God, wheresoever they walk, or dwell, or speak; slumbering and sleeping, in everything that they can with meekness and cleanness of their hearts crying before God: and sometimes, if God will, dreaming of the love of God, and evermore thinking of the Joy of heaven; waking and napping, kneeling and standing, sitting and going, lying down and rising up, eating and drinking and working all other works, night and day, evening and morn, middle-time and all time enduring in true love, wasting no hour, nor half one, but evermore falling down freely in love, privily praying to the Father of heaven, to the peerless Prince Jesus, God's Son, and to the Holy Ghost, beseeching heartily; and before the Holy Trinity tremble

and quake for Joy and mirth and lovely dread to behold God.

Out of which Three glorious Persons in One God comes all grace from heaven unto earth, through a meek heart busily praying, utterly forsaking all worldly things for the love of God, and utterly forgetting all worldly solace and worldly delight, and their own self under their own foot stiffly treading.[1] And thus, as was said before, all can live, who have good will to love God, and to hate sin, from their beginning, and whatsoever time they come who will meekly amend themselves. Alas! for shame, what can we, who are sinful and foul, say if we consider ourselves good, when they who are most clean and most love God consider themselves most sinful, and most vile and most unworthy. But whosoever has no will to live thus, and might come thereunto, they have full great cause for sorrow, and to purchase for themselves this will. For, get who get may, this world is wide enough and good enough to win heaven in; and it is rich enough and pleasant enough and sinful enough to win hell with, flee who flee may.

Prayer freely beflowers our souls with flowers of sweetness, with the fairness and sweetness of the fruit falling into meek hearts, which is freely to behold the fairness of God, in all meek virtues, lighting with the

[1] Rolle's mingling of singular and plural is fully reproduced as intensely characteristic of his absorption in what he is saying to the exclusion of how he says it.

beams of His brightness all clean consciences and all meek hearts. But not perchance as some, when they have left great sins and have begun partly to turn themselves to virtues, and with manifold penance in several wise to punish their bodies, think within their hearts that they can have contemplation of Joy in a short time. The which, if it be so, well must they brook it. But for the fear of God and the health of their souls, they have great need verily to have within their hearts how they came thereunto, in what time, with what travail, in what life : and if through the grace of God, the beginning be good, to hold on heartily, and God will make it better : and if it be amiss, it is good to amend it, or else it will be hard to give an account of all secret faults, which true men deny not, on the dreadful day of Doom. But whoso feel in themselves that they have greatly trespassed, and think that they have comfort and lightness, in a short time and without long travail, it may be pleasure and mirth making their hearts merry because they have left their sin, and they think they are joyful and light ; unless their hearts' sorrow be tenderer, so that it has cleansed them from all sins. The which lightness is good if it pass not too far, and a great beginning of good to purchase much grace, if they last on in their good travail : but (it is) not yet contemplation of Joy, and not, though they so ween, yet clear sight of soul and of conscience such as they shall afterwards verily know within their hearts, if they beg grace from God, and busy themselves to last on in God's love ; or else they are far from God, and from all goodness,

so that if they turn again to vanity of the world,[1] . . . . as it may truly be heard by the heart, when the tongue speaks of those who love sin, and hate God's word. But take this word as it is said, for he is worse than mad who judges any man's heart, the which he, on no wise, knows. For no man's wit can truly know, nor, for judgement, ought to know, another man's heart: and he who is in his wit,[2] and with his wit strives on to know the privity of God and the hiding-places of man's heart, which is not lawful but dreadful to know, it is but madness, and outside all goodness: for it belongs unto God and not unto man to judge man's heart: but every man (should judge) his own.

For no man can find true rest in soul till they can live and judge no other man, and till, through God's grace, they can truly inside their hearts think all other men better than themselves, and especially those who give them any good. And if they think themselves most unworthy of all, and therewith fall not into over-much dread nor into despair, they have but the more grace. But none can meek themselves thus, thinking all others better than themselves, without great grace. Let each man, for themselves look into their own conscience, how they err, and judge their own self: for soothly they never dare judge any man who are true judges of their own self. But if it be said of any, it is said of those who

[1] Here there is a hiatus.

[2] In his right mind.

backbite Holy Writ, and turn it backward; or else they degrade it, making it, more tender than it is, according to them; whose hearts are so hard, and so far therefrom, their conscience witnessing, that they can scarcely bear to hear it spoken.

But it is one thing by meekness of a man's self to think himself far from it, and it is another, silently or aloud to think that it cannot be so, or else to gainsay it, and that is most dreadful. But where they should lowly know their trespass and meekly amend themselves, they cast woeful words against God's word, in order to defend themselves, and to maintain stiffly that it is not good, and they say evil openly and rudely, without fear.

They gainsay God, and say that "God never said so, God never would say so. It cannot be so: who would be safe if it were so?" See how the fiend picks the truth out of Christian men's hearts; for either he makes them believe Holy Writ is not true, or else that no man shall be safe, and these are neither of them true. If they thought it secretly, it were no heaviness nor load for any but themselves: but when they say it openly, then they burden other men greatly, and especially tender hearts, making sorrow for them. And thus, if they could, they would make God hold with sin; and, contrary to God, would excuse their sin; for they are not willing to leave it. For, being dreadless, were they willing to leave and to cease from their sins, they would not say thus; and

if they had never so little of the dread of God, they durst not speak thus.

"But who does thus, so?" Peradventure, few do or speak thus. But whoso does thus—they need no other witness but their own self—let who so will amend themselves, before that day comes when heaven and earth and hell must damn us for our ill-deeds, and all good men shall be glorified for their good deeds.

Through the virtue of Prayer being hot in our hearts with the burning of love, Jesus Christ sends holy angels from heaven to our helping in all mischiefs, to make mirth and to be more glad when mischiefs befall, and meekly to endure despising and scorn, hatred, ill-will, anger and annoyance; which meekly to endure makes the heart of those who love God light.

Prayer purifies those who have used sin and the vanity of the world.

It slays their old sins, and fills full of grace those who had lost, through their old trespass, the love of God; and makes those Joyful and light to serve God, who with their ill deeds, had greatly grieved Him. All that ever they can do for the love of God, they think over-little and count it as nought; so fully is their will set to please God: whereas, lovers of the world, if they do ought for the love of God and the health of their souls, they think themselves more worthy to have thanks from God for a good deed, than the true lovers of God think themselves

worthy, for all the good deeds and the true service of all their life-time. But the lovers of the world and of their own lust get never the more but the less for their vain stirring and the lovers of God get never the less but the more for their meek thinking.

Prayer is evermore pleasing to God, with love brightly burning in a meek heart, without smoking, smelling full sweetly, in all meek minds holding the love of our Lord God hotly in our hearts.

Prayer thrusts at the fiend, and holds him aback, and makes him fail and flee like a fool standing far-off, not daring to come near, having great wonder how it fares that his strength is just turned into mist: for shame of himself he wins him away, like a coward, clean overcome. But there is no power against the fiend, in our heart, without God's grace.

Prayer slakes and slays and stiffly brings under the lust and liking of the frail flesh, and makes the heart joyful and bright with burning of love, in the loving of God, beholden in heaven.

Prayer meeks our souls and makes our hearts light, liking to live in the love of God, to please God with ghostly working, and gladly to die both with love and dread when God vouchsafes; fastening much mirth and solace into clean hearts; with ghostly fire of burning love making frail flesh fall down, from all kinds of lusts wonderfully losing his might, for flesh is not mighty to abide this

love ; and whilst the heart loves the lust and liking of the flesh it may never wit what love means. For as the heart which is lovelily fastened into the love of God, forgets all the lust and liking of the flesh, right so, that heart which is fastened into the lust and liking of the flesh forgets all love and liking it should have in God.

Prayer opens our wits and the eyes of our hearts on high to behold with the leave and the grace and the gift of God, though we be unkind, the kingdom of Heaven.

Prayer washes us from all wicked works and all sore sins : in every way it destroys sin and thrusts it under, and burns in sunder the band of all bale with a wonderful fire fastened in love, cutting sin, if we will hate it, out of our hearts, with a wonderful fire flying down from heaven, like fire out of flint, marvellous to behold ; lighting, with bright shining, those hearts that stand stiffly in the love and in loving of God ; which is a burning love, lighted with mirth in a meek heart. Whoso pleases to love God without any desire of worldly vanity, and without mingling of worldly mirth and worldly solace, and whosoever hath grace so to love God, they might sit near-at-hand to it, and have no hurt from it : but not in it, nor mingle themselves with it, without great sorrow.

Prayer printed on and shut into a lowly heart with the lovely dread of God, and with mild meekness, evermore dreading to grieve God, and evermore desiring to love God draws from the young lovers of God pleasure and lust which the old lovers have already lost, and fills

them with Joy, and makes them live angels' lives ; which is, to love God without forgetting, and evermore to set themselves quietly in His sight, with everlasting love and cleanness of heart to behold Him.

Prayer gives endless comfort and Joy to those who have trespassed and greatly grieved God, who are oft-times sighing and sorrowing for their sins, who are of true will to trespass no more, but busily to think on everlasting life in the loving of God. Though they may have will and grace for to serve God, yet can they make but little outward mirth . . . . .[1].

[1] The rest of the MS. is torn away.

MEDITATION ON THE PASSION: AND OF THE THREE ARROWS ON DOOMSDAY[1]

NOW open thine heart to think on the pains that Christ tholed for thee, and think them in thy heart just as He tholed them, how they defiled His lovely face with spitting, how they buffetted the fairest face of all mankind. How they bound His sweet hands so fast with cords, that from all the fingers the blood burst out. How they beat with knotty scourges Him who never did amiss with word nor with deed. How all said with one voice and cried on Pilate that He should die as shameful death as any ever died. Yet think, how He was stretched upon the cross that was laid on the earth, and dragged out with ropes to make feet and hands accord with the bored holes made in the tree. So far was He dragged on that cross He lay on, that men might tell all His bones, as Holy Writ tells. And to the tree He lay on, they fastened Him with iron nails.

Afterwards, think how His body was lifted up with the cross and smitten into the earth, as men do with the stake of a tree to make it stand fast in the earth: with that sweet body which was hanged thereon. At this smiting

[1] This Meditation exists in the MS. Rawl. C. 285, and in the MS. Arundel, 507 f. 48. It is undoubtedly Rolle's, is one of his most characteristic writings, a great example of his rhythmical prose. The present rendering is made from the Rawlinson Version, partly because it has more rimes; and partly because Monsignor Benson's in his *Little Book of the Love of Jesus* was made from the Arundel MS.

into the earth all his veins burst, so that the blood streamed out from all his limbs. This grieved Him sorest of all His pains, save for our unkindness, which every day renews His pain.

Afterwards, think how a knight kneeled before Him and in scorn said to Him: "Hail be thou, King of the Jews! Thou that didst help so many now, thou needest to help thyself. Let us now see what thou canst do! Come now down from the cross that thou art nailed to, and we shall trow without anything more, that thou art God's Son of Heaven."

Think on that sharp crown of thorns they had crowned Him with, that made His lovely face stream all with blood. And of that bitter vinegar mingled with gall, which they gave Him to drink when He complained of thirst, as one who had bled much. But wit thou well He thirsted not after spiced drink nor wine, nor after other liquor men use for thirst; but only after the love of man whom He bought so dearly. Think then, when thou dost ought against Him, thou pourest Him out gall to drink, as the Jews did.

Think of His Mother, full of care, and of His Cousin John, who stood near by Him, and saw all that He tholed. No speech of man can tell what sorrow they had in that hour.

Think on those words He said to His Mother whilst He hanged on the Cross. "Woman, lo, here thy Son!"

He said to His Cousin John, " Lo here thy Mother dear ! " Do thou serve her with all they might." What things[1] came from her heart when she heard those words, when she was given to take care of her, man's son for God's Son, the disciple for the Master, the servant for the Lord.

Think how that blessed Body naked and pale hanged on the Rood, so beaten with the scourges which left in Him nothing whole. And yet He was placed so poorly that He had no place to rest His head on, so naked as He hanged, He had no goods to hide Himself with, but His Mother's kerchief knitted about His limbs.

Think how full He was of mercy whilst He hanged on the Rood, who forgave the sins of the thief who hanged by His side, who had, a while before, spoken evil of Him, as the Gospel tells ; and promised him that he should be that day in Paradise with Him.

Think then on the words that Bernard said to Jesus : " Ah God, my Lord, sweet Jesus, what hast Thou done that Thou hangest, so bloody, on the Cross, Thou that never didst amiss but ever did the good ? Innocent, they do Thee to Thy death, woe is me therefore : for I am guilty of the deed ; because they should slay me and let Him pass without harm, in Whom is no occasion of death. Therefore, ye wretches who have done wrong, take me for Him and do me to death, for I am the sinful one who has wrought this ill, in that I have followed the

[1] The MS. Arundel has " sighings."

fiend's counsel : therefore let this Innocent pass, of Whom man could never say ill, but Who has done good to all ; therefore I pray you that I may die for Him."

And again, think inwardly on the Word He said before He yielded up the ghost : this is what He cries to sinful man and says, *Consummatum est*, " All is fulfilled : " that is, " I am filled full with sorrow both in body and in soul." In body that was all pained, from head to heel nothing was left whole. He was pained in soul as the Prophet says : by our unkindness that shewed Him no thanks for His good deeds, but do all that in us is, every day to renew His pain : and that passes beyond all the pain He tholed before, wherefore He says at His end " I am filled full of sorrow." Then think that after these words were said, He bowed down His head and said so that all could hear : " Into Thy Hands, Lord, My Father, My Spirit I yield."

Think on the wonders that befell at that time, how creatures that had no wit repented for His death, and in their manner made sorrow, and shewed that they felt His death full sore. The sun withdrew himself, and waxed mirk : the hard stones all split asunder ; all the earth quaked ; the tombs of dead men, that were made of stone burst open, and the dead locked up in them quickened into life, and witnessed that He Whom the Jews had done to death was soothfast God.

And again, think inwardly on those sorrows which His Mother had, who followed Him all that time right

unto death, and like a careful Mother ever beheld all that they did to her Child. There was never a martyr who tholed so much pain as she did: for all martyrs were pained in that part which can die: but God's Mother was pained in soul which never could die: for everything that her Son tholed struck through her heart. His pains left Him at death; then could they grieve Him no more; but they all remained in her soul, therefore her pains were greater; for sorrow she yearned to die, but no sorrow could slay her. Then was fulfilled the word of Simeon, who said to her "The sword of sorrow shall stick through thy heart."

Then think Who He was Who tholed all that, and how unworthy to be loved they were whom He died for. If thou often hast these stirrings in thy mind, wheresoever thou beest, it ought to meek thine heart in love and make thee flee from sins.

Afterwards think with what devotion He was taken down from the Rood. How the three Maries wrapped His Body, and laid Him in a tomb new made of stone. Think after of His[1] going to Hell; what comfort they had: who so long awaited His coming in that murky place; what sorrow and fear, sighing and gnashing the mad fiends had at that time: how He bound Satan so that he could never harm nor tempt folks after, as before. After of His[1] uprising, how bright, how fair that body,

[1···1] The MS. Rawl. has a gap here: so the account of Christ's "Harrowing of Hell" is supplied from the MS. Arundel.

which the Jews, with the intention to ruin Him for ever, had made so loathly, rose : and now He lives, Almighty God, crowned in Heaven, and shall, at His will, judge them who condemned Him to death.

Think what Joy His disciples had when they saw Him risen, having Mastery over death. Then were they so inebriated with love for Him, that they who before forsook Him and swore they knew Him not, were anxious to die for Him.

To tell of the Joy that His Mother had, there is no tongue to tell it.

Think then, if we keep ourselves from sin in life, though we have been sinful for never so long a time, and will repent sorely and shrive ourselves of that we have done amiss and never turn again we may challenge the right, as heirs, to dwell with Him in bliss without end.

And then think on the dreadful Day of Doom, when God Almighty shall come to judge all Christian souls. and give to every man, as they have deserved ill or good, And as gladfull as His coming shall be unto His chosen children, as grimly and as awful shall it be to those wretched caitiffs who have led their life in lust and likings of their flesh and in deadly sin, and would not amend themselves, but ended therein. To these, God shall say *Congregabo super eos mala : Et sagittas meas complebo in eis :* " And I shall shoot " says God " three sharp

arrows at them, that shall smite them so that they shall never recover."

The first arrow is when He shall bid them rise and come to doom, when He shall say : *Surgite mortui* and *venite ad judicium.* Through the might of His word, all that are dead shall quicken to life, and tombs of marble and of brass shall break open, to let out the bodies that were locked in them. This is the arrow that the holy man ever, as it were felt smart him full sore and said : *Siue commedam siue bibam, siue aliquid aliud faciam, semper michi videtur quod illa vox terribilis intonat in auribus meis : Surgite mortui & venite ad iudicium*—this word never came out of his heart[1]. Since this holy man[2] had such dread of these words, methinks it were necessary for the sinful to have them in mind, to make them afraid so that they fall in no sin. For as Solomon says : *Sicut fremitus leonis : ita ira dei.* Then this is the nature of the lion that he frightens all beasts with his roaming and makes them so without heart from fear that they dare flee nowhere ; but though his noise be hideous to all beasts yet it comforts his own whelps and quickens them to life.

Right so shall Jesus Christ bear Himself at the Day of Doom to all that have lived in sin and would make no end of their evil life ; at this calling they shall be so frightened and so unmighty in themselves that they shall

[1] Used here as of *memory.*

[2] The MS. Arundel quotes the words as S. Jerome's.

not be able to move themselves anywhere ; but they will be obliged to take ill or good as they have deserved. And as He shall be wrathful unto those wicked wretches, so to His own children who have done His will here, He shall be lovely and winsome to look upon : they shall waken with joy at His calling, and wend to His bliss, ever to be there without end. But the sinful wretches shall seek holes to hide themselves in that they see not His dreadful face which frighten them out of their wits ; as Isaiah the prophet says : *Introibunt in speluncis petrarum et in voragines terre a facie formidinis domini, cum surrexerit percutere terram.* Of this Coming, S. Anselm speaks and says : " On the Day of Doom, our loathly sins shall on one side accuse us of the slaughter of our souls. On the other, righteousness shall stand, which has no pity. How shall the sinful fare then? for flee he cannot, nor hide he cannot, but it behoves him to stand and take all he has deserved. Then shall they who are so bold now, that they harm all who dwell about them, be like cowards and without heart both in word and deed ; they shall be so overcome that they would fain creep into a mousehole, or into some pit, stink as it might.

The other arrow which shall smart them so sore is when God shall arraign them for all they have done since they were born that turned to sin. Then shall the Doomsman shew His wounds to all man-kind, that they may soothly see what He, not guilty, tholed for their sins ; and on this manner He shall arraign them : " I took thee

from the earth and made thee with My hands, and I stalled thee in Paradise, that lovely place, there to remain, to have been without care and to have dwelled there hadst thou been obedient, and had not broken the covenant that was made between us. But since thou didst withstand my bidding and left Me for My foe, therefore My righteousness damns thee to hell there to be in sorrow and woe. And when I saw thee so afraid, pity stirred Me to have compassion on thee, though thou deservedst nought: I lighted down on to the earth and took thy nature of thee, wherein, for thy guilt, I should be sore pained. In that nature I accepted many an insult: I tholed villany in word and deed, and for thee was bought and sold; after Judas sold Me, the Jews buffetted and spitted in My face, and with sharp thorns they crowned Me, and with knotty scourges they beat me, all this was I treated for thee. Hadst thou been kind this ought to have made thee grieve for Me. And in My thirst, they gave Me vinegar mingled with bitter gall; and for thee thus was I pierced and nailed hand and foot on the tree, and My side opened with a spear to make My heart bleed for thee.

I forgot Myself for I chose to love thee, for on thee was all My thought: all this have I done for thee, and thou, like an unkind wretch, hast set it at nought. Now understand, thou unkind man, lift up thine head and look at Me, behold My side, foot and hand, how I am treated for thee. Thus am I treated, not for My guilt, but to

heal thy wounds which were so sore, and I took thy guilt on Me that thou shouldest love Me more. Forsooth, I wot not what more I could have done for thee ; therefore it readily behoves thee now to show what thou hast tholed or done for Me. For now righteousness wills that each one shall have as he hath deserved, either to dwell in pain or in bliss ever and aye." How then shall the wretched fare when he shall be thus arraigned by the Dooms-man, and all his sins openly known and shewn in all men's sight ? For nought may there be hid, save that which here was done away by shrift of mouth, for as the holy man Job says : *Reuelabunt celi iniquitatem, et terra consurget aduersus eum.* And again the Apostle says ; *Testimonium reddet illis consciencia illorum,* that is, " Their own inner knowledge shall bear witness against them."

Who can better bear witness against a man than he that ever dwells with a man, that sees and knows all his works ? that is a man's Inner-Wit, that nought can be hid from ?

And again, his evil works shall wend with him to the dreadful doom, and shall stand by him all raw, to his shame and that of all mankind, and thus bitterly shall chide with him so that all the world may hear : " We," shall they say, " are those works that thou hast wrought with wrong, in despite of thy good Lord, Whom thou didst set at nought for us ; for thou wroughtest us against the will of Him Who shed His heart-blood for thee ;

therefore are we now all gathered together as witnesses against thee; for thou wouldst not amend thyself whilst thou mightest. Now repentest thou that ever thou didst sin, but, sorry wretch, all too late, for thou hadst no pleasure save in us; and therefore, we shall be with thee in pain without end, to increase thy pain."

The third arrow that He shall shoot shall be when He shall say what S. Matthew says in the Gospel: *Ite maledicti in ignem eternum.* The holy man says: "Sore and bloody are those eyes that for smoke and heat shall weep more tears than there are drops of water in the sea." Thou mayst then ask: "Since they shall weep so much water, why slakes it not the fire which burns them so hot?" Then answers S. Austin and says, "so madly it burns ever the same, and so stalwart is it in its nature, that if all the water of this world flowed over it, it could not slake it, nor yet a little kill it; but tears make it burn more furiously like oil cast into the fire."

That holy father had mind of these words, who said to his disciples after they had long cried to him to say some good word to them; "My dear children, let us learn to weep for our sins, that we weep not for them for ever." What sorrow, what dread, thinkest thou the wearied wretches shall have, when God shall say: "*Ite maledicti in ignem eternum.* When the wearied wretches hear and know that they are damned and that there is no calling again to crave mercy, then shall they say the words of Job: "Let the day perish that I was born in, and the

night in which I was conceived, Alas ! that sorry time when I was born, would that I had been dead in my mother's womb ! Wherefore did my mother nourish me and set me on her knee, and feed me at her breast ? Alas ! for that time : so great travail she lost, and in me nourished a brand to suffocate in hellfire."

When this is said by God's mouth, then shall the good be separated from the evil that they never more meet. Then shall the foul devils drive those wretches into hell, like furious lions, there without end to dwell. Then shall they weary themselves for the time when they ever did ill, for they shall find ready all that can pain them. For the fiends that shall pain them shall never be weary but ever the same bold to work them all woe ; and yet no pain shall be able to slay them.

Adders, snakes, toads and other venomous beasts more than I can name, shall live in that fire, as fish do in the flood, to pain those wretches. And yet, for the thirst that they shall have, they shall seek the adders to suck out their venom, because of the hot fire they are in. There shall be nothing heard but yelling and crying and weeping. And light there is none, for smoke destroys it. Then would they be fain that pain should slay them.

But the children of God, who have done His will here, shall be led by angels to Heaven, to dwell in Joy and bliss ever without end. To which Joy may He Who bought us, bring us. Amen. Amen. Amen.

THE PRIVITY OF THE PASSION

From the Middle-English Rendering of S. Bonaventura's

MEDITATIONS

NOTE

IN the MS. Thornton, still treasured in the Library of Lincoln Cathedral, there is a free rendering of certain chapters of S. Bonaventura's *Meditationes Vitæ Christi*, in that vernacular which Richard Rolle originated and perfected. Mediæval England emphasised the need for study of our Lord's Passion: "'Herewith is the fiend overcome.' This word said our Lord, meaning His Blessed Passion, as He shewed before. In this our Lord shewed a part of the fiend's malice, and fully his unmight, for He shewed that the Passion of Him is the overcoming of the fiend." So wrote Mother Julian. To an age over-addicted to comfort and pleasure, and very inadequately conscious of sin, consideration of the Passion can scarcely be less vital. Perhaps this rendering from the vanished Middle Ages may gain entrance where other Records, possibly blunted by repetition, seem sometimes to fail; may gain it too by its characteristic, direct picturesqueness.

In the abundant reprinting of Mystical Literature in English, little of S. Bonaventura's has appeared: yet he is one of the greatest Mystics not of his own time only, but for all times. In 1890, Pope Leo xiii. wrote thus:— "Having scaled the most difficult heights of speculation in a most notable manner, he treated of mystical theology with such perfection that in the common opinion of the learned, he is *facile princeps* in that field."

It seems appropriate to include his treatise here with Rolle's, for, though scholars think that the latter did not write the Middle English rendering, yet the anonymous translator has clothed the " Seraphic Doctor's " clear spiritual vision in that lucid, unforgettable, simple English of which Richard Hermit was the great master, and which served to present so persuasively our fourteenth century Saints' mystical insight and force.

"It is by patience that charity is perfected; and this was manifested in our Lord Jesus Christ, whose divine charity was so wonderfully patient, and who consummated His love of His Father and of mankind by His most patient sufferings. St. Bonaventure justly remarks that to suffer and endure with patience for the love of God is a much greater thing than to do great works for the love of God. But in this pious souls are often at fault: they will attach this principle to external sufferings, and will not see that it applies with even greater truth to internal and spiritual sufferings. Yet our Divine Lord suffered much greater things in His soul than in His body."

ARCHBISHOP ULLATHORNE,
Christian Patience, p. 49.

THE PRIVITY OF THE PASSION

IN THE NAME OF THE FATHER AND OF THE SON AND OF THE HOLY SPIRIT. AMEN.

Here begins the Privity of the Passion of our Lord Jesu.

WHOSOEVER desires to find comfort and ghostly gladness in the Passion and the Cross of our Lord Jesu, he needs with a busy thoughtfulness to dwell on it, and forget and set at nought all other business: and soothly I trow fully that whosoever would busy himself with all his heart and all his mind, and meditate[1] on this glorious Passion and on all the circumstances thereof; it would bring him and change him into a new state of living. For he that insearches it with deep thought, and with all his heart lastingly, he shall find full many things therein stirring him to new compassion, new love, new ghostly comfort, and so shall he be brought into a new ghostly sweetness. (To reach this state) that I speak of, I trow that a man must raise up all the sharpness of his mind, and open wide the inner eye of his soul, into the beholding of this Blessed Passion, and forget, and for the time cast behind him all other occupations and business; and make himself present in his thought, as if he saw fully with his bodily eye all the things that befell about the Cross, and the glorious Passion of our Lord Jesu: and all that not briefly and passingly, but lovingly, busily

[1] Literally *think all round.*

abundantly and lastingly; not by starts, nor with dulness and heaviness of spirit. Though every man ought with great reverence and sadness to think on all the Life and Deeds of our Lord Jesu that He wrought on earth for mankind, nevertheless much more busily with great sadness and devotion ought he to set all his heart and all his might upon His glorious Passion; for herein, He shews most love and charity to us, the which ought to set all our hearts on fire with love to Him. Therefore set thy self, that is thy mind, wholly thereto; and behold not only the pain and crucifying of thy Lord Jesu when He was done (to death) on the Rood in the hour of Terce; but also from the beginning of His Blessed Passion, which is full of matter for pity and compassion. How great compassion, I pray thee is it to behold and think how our Lord Jesu, Who is both very God and Man, from the hour of His taking at even, to high Terce of the morning when He was done (to death) on the Rood, was in continual battle, and huge sorrow, and bitter reproachings, in many scornings and unreasonable torments, without any rest or ceasing? *Jesu, mercy, Amen.*

Begin now thy meditation at the beginning of Christ's Passion, and pursue it fervently to the last end; on which I shall touch a little for thee; but thou mayest use them more largely, after God gives thee grace. Look now busily on every point as if thou wert there bodily; and earnestly behold Him as He rose up from His Supper, when He had ended His Sermon, with His disciples, and

went with them into a garden, where He was often wont to go with them. Go thou among them, and behold how lovingly, how feelingly He goes with them, and speaks and stirs them up to pray. Behold also how He goes from them the cast of a stone, and meekly and reverently He kneeled down and prayed to His Father. Abide now a little and see the wonders of thy Lord God. Now thy Lord Jesu prays. We read that He ofttimes prayed, but then He prayed for us as our Advocate : but now He prays for Himself. Have, therefore, pity and compassion and wonder at the unmeasurable meekness of Him. For although it be true that He is both God and Man, even to the Father of Heaven, nevertheless, He forgets, as it were, His godhead, and prays meekly as a man; He stood, like any sinner, praying to the Father. Behold also in Him most perfect obedience. What prayed thy Lord Jesu ? Soothly, He prayed His Father that He would deliver Him from the bitter hour of death : He coveted not to die if that were pleasing to the Father of Heaven : and nevertheless His own Father would not hear Him. This I say of one will which was in Christ. For thou shalt understand that there were many and diverse wills in Him, as Doctors say : there was in Him the will of the flesh, and that would on no manner suffer death ; there was also in Him the will of sensuality, and that grudged and was afraid to suffer death ; there was also in Him the will of the reason and that was obedient and consenting to die ; there was also in Him the will of the Godhead and that commanded and ordained Him to die.

And here thou shalt have pity and compassion, for His Father wills utterly that He died for our guilt, and although He be His own, begotten Son, yet will He not spare Him, but gives Him to the death for us. For the Father of Heaven so greatly loved mankind, which through sin was lost, that for the redemption of man's soul, He put His own Son to the death. And then our Lord Jesus takes meekly His obedience, and fulfils it meekly and reverently. Here mayest thou now see the unspeakable and the unmeasurable charity both of the Father and the Son. Therefore let us yield again pity, compassion and all manner of love and worship. Our Lord Jesu prayed His Father a long while and said, " My most merciful Father, I beseech Thee that Thou hear My prayer, and despise not My prayer. Take heed to Me, dear Father, and hear Me ; for I am weighed down in My travail, and My spirit is grieved is Me, and My heart is troubled in Me ; and therefore bow down Thine ear to Me, and hear the Voice of My beseeching. It was to Thy liking, Father, to send Me into this world, that I should make amends for man's trespass that he did to Us. And, as soon as Thou saidest thus, I said ' I go,' and as it is written in the Psalm of Me that I should fulfil Thy will, My God, so would I. Thy truthfulness I have shewed to the world. I have been poor and in many travails from My youth, and I have fulfilled all Thy Will, and done all things Thou hast bidden Me do. And also, whatever thing is yet to do, I am ready to fulfil it. Nevertheless, good Father, if it be pleasing to Thee, take from Me this

bitter Passion that Mine enemies ordain for Me. Thou seest well, My dear Father, how great ill they imagine against Me, and how great falsehood they put upon Me, and all their counsel is to do Me to death. But, holy Father, Thou knowest well that I did never none of those things that they put on Me, and that there is no wickedness in My hands, but I have ever done that which was pleasing to Thee: and they do Me ill for good, and hatred for the great love I shewed to them: and My disciple they have corrupted to be their leader; and have bought Me for thirty metal pieces. And, therefore, I pray Thee, dear Father, that Thou take away from Me this bitter Passion. Nevertheless, if it be otherwise pleasing to Thee, Thy will be fulfilled. Rise up now, Father, I pray Thee and help Me; for certainly, although they know not I am Thy Son, none the less for as much as I have lived among them without any trespass or guilt, and for the many good deeds I have done them, they ought not to be so fell and cruel against Me. But I pray Thee, Father, be not far from Me; because My Tribulation is near, and there is none that will help Me."

When our Lord Jesus had thus prayed, He came again to His disciples and found them sleeping. But He waked them, and bade them wake and pray, that they fell not into temptation, and comforted them; and went again from them as it were the cast of a stone, and made the second prayer; and the third time the same orison; and said: "Righteous Father, since Thou utterly

ordainest that I shall suffer death on the cross for man's soul, Thy Will be done. But I recommend to you My dear Mother and My disciples, the which I have kept till this time whiles I have been with them : But, Holy Father, keep them now from all ill." Behold, in the time of His prayer how His precious blood ran down from His blessed Body like water, abundantly into the ground because of the great anguish and dread that He had of His bitter death, and now behold here busily in how great anguish and tribulation thy Lord Jesu was set in this hour. And behold also, how He prayed thrice before He had any answers ; and therefore suffer thou patiently although thou beest not heard at once.

And when our Lord had thus prayed and was thus in His great anguish, the angel, S. Michael, a prince of the heavenly Court appeared to Him, comforting Him and saying thus :—" Hail ! my Lord Jesu. Your meek praying and Your bloody sweating I have offered to Your Father in the sight of all the Heavenly Court, and we all fell down on our knees praying Him to take away from You this hard Passion. And Your Father answered and said : ' My dear Son Jesu knows well that the ransom and salvation of man's soul, that We all desire so greatly, cannot be done and made without shedding of His blessed Blood, and therefore, if it so be that He will that man's soul be safe, it behoves Him to die for it.' " Then answered our Lord Jesu to the Angel : "The health of man's soul always I covet, and therefore I seek rather to

die that man's soul might be safe, than not to die if man's soul should be lost, and therefore the will of My Father be fulfilled." Then said the Angel to Him : " Be ye therefore of good comfort and suffer manfully ; for soon shall Your distress and pain pass, and after You shall have joy and endless bliss. For Your Father is ever with You, and He shall keep Your Mother and all Your disciples." And then our Lord meekly and reverently received this comforting of the Angel, knowing how through taking our deadliness He was made less than an Angel while He was in this vale of tears ; and just as He was burdened and heavy as a man, just so was He, as a man, comforted by the Angel's words, praying the Angel to recommend Him to His Father and to all the Heavenly Court. And so the Angel took his leave and went again to Heaven. Then our Lord Jesu rose up the third time from His prayer, all wet with bloody sweat. Behold Him now carefully, how He wipes His Face, or else washes it in the stream of Cedron, all full of anguish and woe : and do thou have great pity and compassion on Him, for He could not have wept and sweated blood so greatly without great bitterness of sorrow and anguish. Behold and see now busily all the doings and discomfort of thy Lord Jesu, how He came to His disciples and bade them sleep and take their rest, and He waked and watched as a good Herdsman over His flock. A full great love of our Lord ! Soothly, He loved all His to the last end of His life, when He Himself was beset by so great wrath, and yet He is busy about their rest.

Then saw He His enemies come from afar with force and arms, with lanterns and staves to take Him, and yet He would not waken His disciples but suffered them to sleep, till His enemies were near to Him. Then He wakened them and bade them rise, " for he that has betrayed Me has now come."

And then came Judas and kissed Jesu.

For it was the manner of our Lord that when He sent His disciples to any place, to kiss them at their coming-again : and, therefore, Judas gave the Jews that token that whomsoever he kissed, Him should they take and hold.

But Judas came in front as who should say, " I am not with these armed men nor know them : but I kiss Thee and say, ' Hail, Master ! ' "

Behold now our Lord Jesu here, and see how patiently and how benignly He received the embrace and the kissing of the traitor; and how He suffered Himself to be taken, and hedged in and dispoiled, and be led away like a thief or ill-doer who had no power to help himself: for He had more pity and compassion on His disciples who fled away through terror, than He had for Himself. Behold well now how He is led forth by the wicked Jews towards Jerusalem up the hill hastily, with great pain, and His Hands bound behind Him, roughly girded in only His tunic, bareheaded, and bowing down His back for

weariness and the great hurrying. When He was presented before Caiaphas and other princes and priests of the Law, they made mirth and joy like a lion when he got his prey. They led Him into their chapter-house and examined Him straitly : they procured false witnesses against Him ; they condemned Him, despised Him and spat in His fair Face, they covered His eyes and struck Him, and with many despisings and reproachings they troubled Him hugely : and all He suffered patiently without grudging. And here behold Him well, and have thou compassion on Him.

At last, when they were weary of tormenting Him, they put Him in a prison and bound Him to a pillar of stone, and left armed men with Him to keep securely that He should not get away : and all the soldiers spoke evil, reproaching Him in this manner : Thou thoughtest Thyself to be wiser than our Princes ; it was great folly ! Thou oughtest not once to open Thy mouth against them : how durst Thou be so bold ? But now Thy folly shows clearly, now standest Thou as Thou hast deserved. Thou art worthy to be dead : without doubt Thou shalt be : be sure of that." And thus all those soldiers mocked Him, now one, now another. Behold now thy Lord God how meekly He stood and patiently, suffering all that which they did ; and answers not, but stood still without any excuses, and as if He had been guilty, meekly bending His eyes downward. And here have great compassion on Him.

Ah ! Lord Jesus, into whose hands were You taken, and how great was Your patience ! And thus stood He all the night bound to a pillar, until the morning.

Meanwhile S. John went to our Lady and her companions, where they were together in Mary Magdalene's house, and told them all that was done to their Lord Jesu and to His disciples. Then were there unspeakable sorrows, weepings and cryings, and wringing of hands, and mourning without measure. Behold them with great compassion, for they are set in great anguish and in full great sorrow for their lovely Lord Jesu, for they knew well that He should be killed. Then our Lady turned her to the wall, praying the Father of Heaven for her Son Jesus, and said : " Worshipful Father of Heaven, Father of mercy and pity, I commend into Your hands and Your keeping my Son Jesus, and I beseech You not to be cruel to Him for to all others You are benign and merciful. O endless Father, why shall my dear Son Jesus soon be dead? Soothly, He never did ill to be dead for. But, righteous Father of Heaven, since You will the redemption of man's soul, I beseech You, Lord, that You would ordain it in some other manner than this ; for to You all things are possible. I pray You, holy Father, if it be pleasing to You, that my dear Son Jesu be not done to death, but deliver Him from death and from the hands of sinners, and give Him to me again. For He, out of obedience and reverence to You, does not help Himself, but forsakes Himself utterly as a man who neither might nor could help

Himself. Therefore I pray You, if it please You, that You would help Him."

Thus prayed our Lady for her dear Son with all the affection and will of her heart, and with great bitterness and sorrow. And now, therefore, have pity and compassion on her, who was in that great tribulation for her Son Jesu.

At Prime.

Early in the morning the princes and the great men of the Jews came again and took Him out of prison and bound His hands behind Him, and reproached Him, and bade Him " Come forth, thief, come forth to thy doom, for this day shall we make an end of thy wickedness, and now shall it be seen what all thy wisdom profit thee and serves for." And thus despitefully they led Him forth before Pilate, and He followed them as an innocent lamb led to sacrifice. When His Mother and S. John and their companions came timely at morn to see Jesu, they met Him in the way, and when they saw Him so unlawfully and so despitefully led with so great a multitude, then could no tongue tell the woe, the sorrow they had for Him. In this meeting together, there was great sorrow on both sides ; for our Lord Jesu had great sorrow out of the compassion He felt for all His, and principally for His dear Mother, for He knew well that her sorrow touching Him was unspeakable. Behold carefully therefore every point, for they are all full of sorrow and bitter compassion.

Thus, they led Him forth to Pilate; and those women that loved Him so tenderly they came afar off, for they could not come near Him for the thronging of the Jews. Then the Jews accused Him on many points, and Pilate sent Him to Herod. And Herod was glad, because for a long time he had coveted to see Him work some wonders; but he could get no miracle nor word out of Him. And, therefore, Herod took Him for a fool, and in derision and scorn he clothed Him in white like a fool, and sent Him again to Pilate: and then from that time forward they took Him not only for an evil-doer but for a fool. But he suffered all this full patiently, without any grudging.

Behold now here, thou who wouldest be God's lover, how when He is led to and fro, how shamefacedly and how meekly He goes, His Face inclining earthwards, and hearing with great peace of heart their cries and their reproaches, and suffering their beatings and all manner of uncleannesses. Behold also how His Mother and all His friends, stand afar off looking on, and following with great mourning and hearty sorrow.

When this fell people had brought Him again to Pilate they accused Him cruelly, without ceasing. But when Pilate could find no cause of death, He would have delivered Him, and said to them, "I shall chastise Him and let Him go." Then Pilate commanded them that He should be beaten and scourged. Then they stripped our Lord despitefully without any pity and made Him naked,

and bound His hands behind Him and fastened Him to a pillar; and beat Him with sharp knotty scourges a long while. And, as some Doctors say, on every knot was a sharp hook of iron, so that with every stroke they tore His tender flesh. He stood naked before them a fair young man, in shameful wise, but brilliant in beauty passing all earthly men; He suffered this hard painful beating from these wicked men in His tenderest cleanest flesh.

The Flower of all flesh and of all mankind is now full of blows, beatings and bloody burstings; on every side from every part of His blessed Body streams down the blood of Heaven's King. He is beaten and beaten again, blister upon blister, and wound upon wound; till both the beaters and the beholders were weary, and then they unbound Him. Behold Him here, meekly and fully, and if thou canst have here no compassion of thy Lord Jesus, know thou well that thy heart is harder than any stone. Then was fulfilled the prophecy of Isaiah saying thus: "We beheld Him all outcast, the vilest of all men, and there was in Him neither fairness nor beauty, but He was like a leprous man, smitten and cast down from God."

Ah, dear Jesu, who was he who was so bold to strip Thee and make Thee naked? And how were they much wronglier bold who durst bind Thee so fast? But soothly, most wickedly bold of all were they who

durst so beat Thee ! But truly, Thou Sun of righteousness, Thou didst withdraw Thy bright beam, and therefore was mirkness over all the world. Ah, Lord Jesus, what made Thee suffer all this hard penance, torment and pains. Truly Thine immeasurable love for us, and our great wickedness that could not be washed away save by the precious stream of Thy precious Blood. Ah ! Lord Jesu may that great wickedness which caused Thee to be so cruelly tormented be fought against.

When they loosed Him from the pillar, He went about seeking His clothes, which were cast here and there when He was first stripped. Carefully behold Him here beaten and all trembling with cold ; for, as the Gospel says, the weather was cold. But when He would have clad Himself again with His own clothes, they would not suffer Him ; but led Him forth all naked before Pilate and said to him : " Sir, this traitor made himself a King, and therefore we should clothe him in a king's manner, and crown him." Then, they took an old red mantle dirty and out of shape, and clothed Him therewith, and took a garland of sharp thorns instead of a crown, and thrust it on His Head, and put a sceptre in His Hand, and all for scorn. Carefully behold now and have thou compassion for His great pains ; and yet did He all that they bade Him, and suffered all that they did to Him : He took the red garment, He bare the crown of thorns on His Head, and took the sceptre in His Hand ; and they kneeled before Him and scorned Him and called Him

King ; and He suffered all and spake not again. Behold Him now with compassion and tenderness of heart, how His Head was pricked through with sharp thorns through His blessed brain : and ofttimes they smote Him with the sceptre on the Head for scorn and despite : and behold His blessed Face all running with red blood. O excited blind wretches ! how dreadful and fearful shall that worshipful King's Head appear again in His righteous Doom, that ye smote so cruelly and despitefully. They scorned and despised Him as if He would have been but could not be a King, and He suffered all patiently as though He had been the servant of them all.

And yet they thought this not enough ; but for more scorn and reproof they gathered together all the multitude of Jews, and brought Him forth before them thus scorned, wearing the crown of thorns, and led Him before Pilate. Behold now tenderly, how He stood all ashamed, meekly bowing His Head before so great a multitude of folk roaring and crying " do Him on the Cross," scorning Him as if He had been a fool, and as if all that He had spoken before to the princes and to the Pharisees had been but folly ; and, therefore, they ordered Him thus and brought Him to this plight : and so not only did He suffer of them sorrow and bodily pain, but also many reproaches and despite.

THE MEDITATION OF TERCE.

Then all the multitude of the Jews came crying with a great voice that He should be crucified, and thus was

He condemned guiltless of that cursed Doomsman, Pilate. They had forgotten all His benefits that He had done to them, nor are they stirred to pity albeit He was an innocent, and clean of life : nor will they leave off all the pains and torments they have done Him before ; but they make joy and mirth that their malicious intention and their wicked will is fulfilled. They scorned Him and hurried Him to His death.

Then they brought Him again and stripped Him of His purple, and He stood naked among them, and sought His own clothes that were thrown about, and clad Himself with great shame before all those who scorned Him as if He had been the vilest of all men and forsaken of God. Behold here and wonder at His great meekness and patience, and conform thyself to it and follow as much as thou canst. When they had clothed Him they led Him forth to His death with great haste, and laid on His back which was so sore and full of wounds, the heavy cross. And He took it patiently like a meek lamb, and bore it forth with great penance and anguish ; and they led Him forth between two thieves : and that was His company.

O good Jesu, how great shame and villainy did the cursed Jews to you, that made Thee King of true-fellows to thieves ! and Thou hadst more shame and more reproach than the thieves ; for they made Thee bear Thine own cross, and we read not that of the thieves.

Behold Him here with great pity and compassion, how He went stooping with that great heavy burden that

He bare, that was the cross. But forasmuch as His sorrowful Mother could not come to Him for the great throng of people, she went by another nearer and shorter way, with S. John and her companions, and met her Son coming out of the city. And when she saw her Child thus loaded with His heavy burden, and He running all over with blood, she fell in a swoon and nearly was dead for sorrow; nor might she speak a word to Him nor He to her, so was He hurried to His death.

And when He had borne that heavy cross a great while, so that for weariness and the sore wounds and soreness he could no longer bear it, He laid it down: and because they would not tarry His death for fear Pilate's sentence might change, for he behaved before as if he would have delivered Him: they made one take the cross, and bear it forth, and led Jesus, bound as a thief, to the mount of Calvary. Thinkest thou not that all this that He suffered in the hour of matins, prime and terce, without any more doing on the cross had been sorrow and pain enough, bitterness, horror and anguish to bear? Certes I trow yes, and much stirring to piteous compassion, yea and bringing into tender and loving hearts great matter for patience. And thus we have said in this part what befell in these three hours.

THE MEDITATION OF MIDDAY.

Therefore, when our Lord Jesu was thus villainously brought to that stinking place of Calvary, thou mayest behold wicked works on every side. Behold them who

stand beside, and with thy ghostly eye behold how some make the cross ready, some ordered the nails and some the hammers ; other some bring forth ladders and other instruments that they had ordered to do Him on the Cross with. Then they stripped Him again before all the people, and tore off roughly His clothes which were dry and hardened to His blessed Body all about Him in His blessed Blood, and so they drew off the flesh and skin without any pity. And certainly this was a great and insufferable pain, for thereby they renewed all His old bruisings and His dry wounds, and the skin, which before was left on Him, then was altogether rent off and cleft by His clothes. O what sorrow and woe, trowest thou, had His mother when she saw Him thus dealt with ? She had sorrow without measure and also great shame, when she saw Him stand thus naked, for the false Jews left not so much on Him as His last garment ; and, therefore, His sorrowful mother went in great haste to her Son and wraps Him and covers Him with her own head-vail. O Lord Jesu how much sorrow and pity was then in her heart. I hope she might not speak to Him a word for great sorrow and tribulation of spirit. But she could help Him no more, nor do more for Him than just to cover Him thus. For they tore Him from her with great indignation and enviously, and as mad men they flung Him wide-spread on the Cross, and strained out His Arms with great violence on every side, and smote Him through both the Hands to the cross with great nails ; and when they had so done, they went to His Feet ; and the holes

of the cross were made so far that His Feet could not reach them by a great piece : and then they took ropes and with great violence they dragged out His Body and Feet till they met the holes. And after that they raised up one end of the cross, as many as might lay hands on it, and let it fall down into a stone mortise, already made ; and in this heavy falling all the joints and sinews of His blessed Body burst asunder.[1]

And when He was thus outspread upon the cross more straitly than any parchment skin is spread on a harrow, so that men could tell all the blessed bones of His Body, there ran from Him on every side streams of Blood out of His blessed wounds. For He was set so straitly that He could not move foot nor hand nor limb of Him save His blessed Head : these three nails bare up and sustained all the weight of His Body. He suffered much pain, yea more than heart can think or tongue can tell. He hung between two thieves as though He had been in fault. On every side were reproaches and pains. And yet when He was so hard beset yet would they not cease their scornings : some blasphemed Him and said, "fie on Him that destroys": and other some said, "Other men saved He, but Himself He cannot help. If He be God's Son let Him come down from the Cross and we will have faith in Him." And in many an other wise

[1] This account of the Crucifixion is not a translation of S. Bonaventura's. It is very close to Richard Rolle's description in his *Meditations on the Passion*, though it lacks some details given in that.

they reproached Him all the day. Also the soldiers who crucified Him divided His clothes among them in His own sight. And all this they did in presence of His sorrowful Mother, whose sorrow and compassion was a great cause of increasing her dear Son's passion ; and the Son's passion increased the Mother's sorrow : for our Lady hung on the Rood in soul with her dear Child, and coveted rather to die with Him than to live.

There was also beside the cross, standing by our Lady, John Evangelist, Mary Magdalene, and the other two Maries, our Lady's sisters, and all these wept full tenderly for our Lord Jesu : they had great compassion for our Lord Jesu and for His Mother ; and so often was their sorrow renewed as any new suffering, evil-speech or reproof was offered to our Lord Jesu.

A Meditation of None.

While our Lord Jesu hung on the cross, till the hour of His death, He was not idle but He taught great perfection. He spake Seven Words, which we read in the Gospel.

The first was when He prayed for them that did Him to death, saying, " Father forgive them their trespass for they know not what they do." These words came out of great patience, perfect love and charity, and also a setting of Example of great mildness and pity. The second word was when He spake to His Mother of S. John, and said : " Woman, behold thy Son." He called

her not Mother, but Woman, that she should not for tenderness of love have more sorrow and distress.

The third word was when He spake to the thief who hanged beside Him on the cross, and said : " This day, shalt thou be with me in Paradise." Ah ! this was a kind word and a sweet word, and a word to us of great comfort, when he that was a thief and a misdoer all his life to the last hour of his death, and then because he bethought himself of his sin and believed in our Lord Jesu, had forgiveness. Now, Lord, loved might Thou be.

The fourth word was Eloi, Eloi, lama sabacthani, that is to say, " My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me ? " as who should say, " My Father, so much Thou lovest man's soul, that Thou hast given Me to be dead for it, and so seems it that Thou hast forsaken Me."

The fifth word was " I thirst." This was a bitter word, stirring to compassion both His Mother and S. John, and all His friends who loved Him tenderly : and to the pitiless Jews it was comfort and great gladness. For though it was so that He thirsted for the health of man's soul, nevertheless in reality He thirsted bodily ; and that was no wonder, for through shedding of His precious blood so abundantly, and for the great anguish that He suffered without ceasing from the Thursday at even to the Friday at high-noon, He was all inwardly dry and thirsty. And when these unpitying men thought within themselves how they could most injure Him, they

took vinegar and gall, mingled them together and gave Him to drink.

The sixth word was when He said, " It is all done," as who would say : " Father, the obedience that Thou badest Me do, I have fulfilled it, and yet if there be any more that Ye will that I do, I am ready to fulfill it." And then, He began to languish as the manner is about death, now closing His eyes, and now opening them, now bowing down His Head on the one side and now on the other : and all His strength and all His power began to fail. And then said He the seventh word, crying with a high voice and a mighty, and with tears weeping, saying, " Father, I commend My spirit into Thy Hands." And then when He had said these words, He yielded up the ghost.

O dear friend, what sorrow thinkest thou, wrapped the soul of His dear Mother, when she saw her dear Son so painfully fail and so dolefully die ? I trow that for great pain and anguish she was sunk in sorrow, and made as it were insensible and half-dead, much more than when she met Him in the way bearing His cross. And what, thinkest thou, did Mary Magdalene, who so much loved Jesu ? What did S. John, by Jesus most loved of all His disciples ? And what thinkest thou that the other two sisters of our Lady did ? What could they do ? They were sunk in and filled with bitterness of sorrow, and made drunken with sobbing and sighing, for they all wept without measure. Behold now how thy Lord Jesu hung dead upon the cross for love of thee.

All the multitude of the folk were then gone home, except only our Lady and her sisters and S. John: they remained and sat them down beside the cross, and often they looked upon their Love, awaiting help, that they might take Him down and bury Him: Now, if thou wouldest well and advisedly behold thy Lord Jesu, thou mayest find that from the crown of His head to the sole of His feet there was no whole spot left on Him: nor limb nor part of His blessed Body that was not full of pain, passion, woe, anguish and sorrow. Thou hast now heard me rehearse here the manner of His crucifying, His passion and His bitterness and His rueful death, the which He suffered in the hour of Terce,[1] and of None; according to this little writing, to stir to devotion at this Season: and, therefore, study thou devotedly, meekly and busily to cleave thereto, and take example thereby as much as in thee is, through the help of the mercy of Jesu, and follow thereafter. And now I will rehearse to thee what befell after He was dead at the hour of None.

ALSO AT NONE.

After the hour of None, the piteous Mother of Jesu, our Lady S. Mary, S. John, Mary Magdalene, and the two sisters of our Lady, they sat still abiding and beholding without ceasing our Lord Jesu so hanging betwixt two thieves, naked, and so piteously wounded, so bitterly tormented, so shamefully done to death, and utterly forsaken of all men.

[1] S. Bonaventura wrote Sexta.

And as they sat thus together, they saw come from the city a great company of armed men that were sent from the princes of the Jews to take them down who hung on the cross on the Great Sabbath Day. Then our Lady and her companions rose up and beheld them, for then their sorrow began again all new, and fear and dread. Our Lady was then fully afraid and could not but turn her to her Son as He hung dead on the Rood, and said to Him, " My dear Son, wherefore come these men again? What will they do to Thee more? Have they not done Thee to death? My dear Son, I weened they had fulfilled all their will on Thee: but methinketh they will not cease to pursue the dead. My dear Son, I know never what I shall do, for neither might I have Thee living nor may I defend Thee dead. But I shall come and stand beside the cross at Thy feet, my dear Son, and I beseech Thy dear Father, that He make them to have mercy and pity on Thee." And then they all five kneeled down together before the cross of Jesu, weeping sore.

Then came these wicked Jews, and when they saw these two thieves that hung alive by our Lord, they broke their thighs and slew them altogether, and cast them villainously into a ditch. And when they came to our Lord Jesu, our Lady, His Mother, was afraid that they would do so with our Lord: she fell down on her knees and held up both her hands tenderly weeping, and said: " Brethren, I pray you for God's love that you do no more to my Son. I here am His sorrowful Mother, and

ye know well that I never grieved you nor did you any trespass : and although my Son seemed contrary to you, ye have now slain Him ; and I will forgive you the wrong and the trespass that ye have done, and my dear Son's death, if ye do me the mercy not to break His limbs, that I may lay Him whole in His grave. It needs not that ye break His limbs, for ye see well He is dead and passed forth."

Then said John, and Mary Magdalene and our Lady's sisters : " Ah dear ! what do you, why do you kneel, sweet Lady of Heaven? You kneel at the feet of wicked men, and you pray to those who will hear no prayer. Think you to bow to the mercy of cruel, wicked and proud men ? Nay Lady, it will not be : for meekness is abominable to proud men, and therefore Lady, you travail in vain."

Then one of them, called Longinus, who then was proud and wicked, but after was converted and was a holy martyr, he took a long spear, and despising our Lady's prayer, fiercely and with a fell heart he thrust our Lord through His sweet heart, and made a grievous wound : and at once there ran out blood and water.

Then fell His Mother in a swoon in Mary Magdalene's arms. Then John, for the greatness of his sorrow, took heart, and said : " Ye wicked men, why do ye thus ? See ye not well He is dead ? Will ye also slay His sorrowful Mother ? Go home, and let us bury Him ourselves." Then, as God would, they went home.

And then they comforted our Lady and set her up: and then she asked them what they had done to her Son, and they said no more than she saw. Then sighed she and beheld her Son so piteously wounded. Then she nearly died for sorrow. How often, thinkest thou, our blessed Lady suffered the pain of death? Truly, as often as she saw any new pain or passion done to her Son. And, therefore, the prophecy of holy Simeon was fulfilled, that said the sword of sorrow should through-pierce her heart. Then they sat them down by the cross again, and wist not what they could do. For they could not take down the Body, they had not the strength. Nor durst they go away and leave Him on the cross; nor could they stay there long, for night came on them; and thus they were set in great perplexity and doubt what was best for them to do. Ah, merciful Jesu, how couldst Thou suffer Thine own Mother, whom Thou didst choose from all the women in the world to be Mirror and Example to the world, and Thine own resting-place, to be thus pained, troubled, tormented and distressed? It is time she had some rest wouldst Thou vouchsafe it . . . . .

At the Hour of Evensong.

Another time they looked and saw come from city-wards a company. But it was Joseph of Arimathæa and Nicodemus, who came with instruments to take down the blessed Body of our Lord Jesus Christ; and also they brought with them a hundred pounds of aloes and myrrh. Then our Lady and her companions rose up with great

dread, and weened it had been some new shame of torment. Ah! dear God! how great was their tribulation that day! Then John looked and said: "Yonder comes Joseph and Nicodemus": and then our Lady was greatly comforted, and thanked God, Who had thought on them and sent them help and succour, and bade John that he should go to them and keep them. And John, in great haste met them: and each hailed the other with great weeping and mourning, for a long while they could not speak to each other for tenderness of compassion and greatness of sorrow and weeping. Then Joseph spake and asked where our Lady was, and who was with her, and what all the other disciples of Jesus did. Then John told them of our Lady and her companions; but of Peter and all the other disciples he could not tell, for he had not heard tell of them all that day. And when they came near to the cross, at once they fell down on their knees and worshipped our Lord. And then our Lady and her companions kneeled down and with great reverence received them and honoured them, and they kneeled again. And then said our Lady to them: "Ye do well that ye have mind of our Lord and your Master, for He loved you full much; and I tell you that I have full great comfort of your coming, for we wist not before what we could do; and, therefore, God thank you."

Then they answered and said:—"We sorrow and mourn with all our hearts for all that is done to Him, and fain would we have helped Him, but we could not

overcome wickedness with right, nevertheless this little service shall we do to our Lord." Then rose they up and made them ready to take Him down. Then Joseph set up a ladder on the right side, and drew out the nail from His right Hand with great travail, for it was full fast driven into the Tree, and the nail was clumsy in itself; and took it to John and bade him that our Lady should not see it for fear of her swooning. Then Nicodemus went up on the left side and took out that nail, and took it to John. Then Nicodemus came down and went to the Feet, and Joseph bare up the Body of Jesus. Ah! Joseph, well was it for thee who might so hold the blessed Body of Jesus! Then took our Lady that hand which hung downward, with great reverence, and put it to her face, and beheld it and kissed it with many tears and sore sighs. When the nail of the feet was pulled out, Joseph came softly down, and then they all took His blessed Body and laid It down on the ground, and our Lady took His Head on her knee, and Mary Magdalene His Feet, where before time she had found great grace. All the others stood about Him, and made great moaning, and lamentation and weeping, as if it had been their own begotten Child.

At Compline.

After they had long stood thus, weeping a great while, Joseph came to our Lady and prayed her that she would suffer them to prepare the Body and bury it. Then said our Lady: "Nay, good friends, take not from me my Son so soon, but rather bury me with Him." She

wept without comfort, she beheld the wounds of His Hands and Feet and Side, now one and now the other, she beheld His lovely Face defiled with spitting and bruised blood, His Head pricked with sharp thorns; there was then no weeping, no beholding, no kissing which could satisfy her.

But it drew near to night, and John prayed her that she would vouchsafe to allow Joseph and Nicodemus to prepare the Body of Jesus and bury it, "for they might likely," he said "if they tarried longer fall in danger of the Jews." Then she, like a wise and discreet lady, bethought herself how she was committed to John's keeping: she blessed her Son and suffered them to do with Him whatsoever they would. Then Joseph and Nicodemus began to wrap Him in sendal, as was the Jews' manner of burying. But our Lady still held His Head in her lap, to wrap It herself: and Mary Magdalene His Feet, and prayed them that she might wrap His Feet, where she had found mercy and grace. Then she took His Feet and held them, and nearly swooned for sorrow; and the Feet which before she washed with tears of compunction, afterwards she washed much better with tears of devotion and bitter compassion.

She saw His Feet so dolefully wounded and caked dry with blood, that she wept full tenderly: she longed to die of sorrow, but she could not. She would fain have anointed all His Body and wrapped it, but she had no power thereto; she could do no more, she washed His

Feet with tears of her eyes, and wiped them with her hairs, she embraced them and kissed them, clothed and wrapped them in the best way she could. Then when all the Body was prepared, they looked to our Lady that she should wrap the Head, and then they began to weep all new. Our Lady saw that she should no longer tarry : she kissed her dear Son and said to Him :—" My dear Son, now hold I Thee dead on my knee : Ah, how hard is the separation of Thee and me. Merry and joyful was our life together, without grievance or offence of any other, although Thou beest thus dead and spilt my dear Son, without guilt. Truly, my dear Son, I served Thee, and Thou me : but in this battle, Thy Father would not help, and I could not in any way, and Thou didst spill Thyself for mankind. Oh dear Lord, how hard and painful was that buying ! I am fain for the love of man's soul ; but for Thy sorrow and Thy bitter death I pined without measure : for I knew, dear Son, that Thou didst never sin nor trespass against man, and therefore art Thou done to death. Now, my dear Son, is our fellowship divided ; now it behoves me to part from Thee. I, Thy most sorrowful Mother, now shall I bury Thee, my dear Son ; and afterwards whither shall I wend ? Where shall I dwell ? how shall I live my life without Thee ? I would fain be buried with Thee that where Thou art, I might be. But since I cannot be buried with Thee, my soul I shall leave in the grave with Thee, I commend it to Thee. Ah ! my dear Son, how bitter is this separation ! " and thus with a flood of tears she washed His

Face, much better than Magdalene did His Feet. She wiped His Face, and kissed His Mouth and His Eyes, and wound His blessed Head in a kerchief, and carefully wrapped It as It should be: and at last she crossed Him and blessed Him. And then they all arose and kneeled before Him, honoured Him and kissed His Feet, and took up His Body and bare It to His grave. Our Lady held His Head, and Magdalene His Feet, and the others went in the midst bearing His Body. For the grave was not far from the place where He was crucified, in the which, kneeling, they buried Him with great reverence, weeping with bitter tears, sad sobbings and sorrowful sighings. And when He was thus laid in His grave, His Mother blessed and embraced Him, and fell upon her dear Son: and then John and her sisters lifted her up, and covered the grave with a great stone.

A Meditation after Compline: and other things of His Burying.

When Joseph of Arimathæa had fulfilled his office, he said to our Lady: "For God's sake, and for the love of your dear Son Jesu, my Lord and Master, would that you would vouchsafe to come home to my house! I know well, Lady, that you have no house of your own, and all that I have it is at your will." And Nicodemus prayed her in the same manner. Ah! Lord Jesus, how great compassion is this! the Queen of Heaven has not where to be harboured at night: and all the sorrowful days of her widow-hood she must live under other men's

roofs : and these may well be called her days of widowhood, for her dear Son, our Lord Jesu was to her both Spouse and Son, Father and all other goods, and, therefore, when she forwent Him she forwent all other goods with Him. And, therefore, was she truly widowed, and had no dwelling-place to come to. Then she bowed meekly to them, thanking them for their good-will, and said she was committed to John, and, therefore, she could only do John's bidding. And then John answered and said he would take her to Mount Sion, where our Lord Jesus supped the night before with His disciples. Then Joseph and Nicodemus took their leave of our Lady, and worshipped the sepulchre and went home ; and John and our Lady waited still at the grave. And when it began to draw towards night, John said to our Lady, " it is not right that we stay here over long, or that we come to the city by night, and, therefore, if it please you, let us go hence." Then our Lady rose up, and they both kneeled down together at the sepulchre ; then our Lady embraced the sepulchre and blessed it and said : " My dear Son, I may no longer dwell now with Thee, I recommend Thee to Thy Father." Then she lifted up her eyes heavenwards and prayed to the Father, saying : " Endless Father, I recommend to You my dear Son Jesus, and my own soul, the which I leave here with Him." And then began they two to go. When she came to the Cross, she kneeled down on her knees and honoured the Cross, and said : " Here died my dear

Son, and here was His precious Blood shed," and so did all her companions.

Here, thou mayest think that our Lady was the first person who adored the Cross, just as she was the first to tell and rehearse the deeds and words of their sweet Lord Jesus. Our Lady was evermore peaceful and quiet in spirit, for she had evermore certain hope that He should soon rise again, and on that Saturday all the faith of Holy Church was in her alone ; and, therefore, is this Saturday specially honoured in the honouring of our Lady.

Nevertheless, she could not be merry nor glad for thinking upon the bitter death of our Lord Jesus, her dear Son. At even, after the sun-setting, when it was lawful to work, Mary Magdalene, Mary of James, and Mary Salome, our Lady's sisters, went to buy spicery to make ointment of. Behold, now carefully, how they went with heavy cheer, as if they were widows, and came to a man who was of goodwill to their Lord, and gladly and willingly fulfilled their desire, and they bought spicery of him, and paid him for it, and came home and made this ointment.

Behold carefully, these women how truly and steadily, how devoutly in the best manner that they can, they travail in their Lord's service, with many tears and sore sighings. Our Lady and the apostles all stood and beheld them, and all that night they abode at home.

HOW OUR LORD WENT TO HELL, FIRST AFTER HIS DEATH.

Behold now what our Lord Jesus did on the Saturday. As soon as He was dead, He went down to hell to our holy Fathers that were in Limbo, till the time of His resurrection: and then were they all in great Joy, for the sight of God is perfect Joy. There also was the Thief, to whom our Lord hanging on the cross said, "This day shall thou be with Me in Paradise," for Paradise is called the sight of God; for as soon after the Passion of our Lord both the thief and all the holy Fathers who were in Limbo saw the Joy of God as He is. Behold now here the great mercy and goodness of our Lord, Who would descend down to hell, and the unmeasurable meekness and charity that He showed in His dying. He might have sent one of His angels to them to have visited His servants, and to take them out of hell and present them to Him wherever He had liked. But His great charity and His meekness would not suffer Him but that He should altogether die, and therefore He, Lord of all things, came in His own Person, and visited them not as servants but as friends, and was there with them till the Sunday at morn. Then the holy Fathers made great Joy at His coming: then were they in continual praise in hymns and ghostly songs. When they felt His most healthful coming, they ran up to Him joyfully, saying, "Blessed be our Lord God of Israel, for He has visited us and bought His people." And although all these words be not contained in the Gospel, nevertheless

the Gospel bears witness that our Lord Jesus did many things that the Evangelists wrote not.

Thou mayest also think that our Lord Jesu appeared first to His blessed Mother, our Lady, after His resurrection; and in such meditations, according to the great compassion that thou hast of His death and His bitter Passion, shall thy soul be fed with the sweetness of His glorious resurrection, and so shall thou be turned in to love of the Lord Jesu Christ, Who lives and reigns without end. Amen.

The Rising-up of our Lord Jesu and how He appeared first to His Mother, our Lady S. Mary, Amen.

When our Lord Jesus had despoiled hell and taken Adam and Eve and all other holy Fathers and set them in Paradise—that is a place of delight where Enoch and Heli dwelt; He took leave of them and said He would go and take His Body again, and raise it again to life. Then came He with great haste to His grave, on the Sunday early at morn; and took again His blessed Body out of the grave, and went forth through His own might. That same hour, early at morn, Mary Magdalene, and her two sisters asked leave of our Lady and went with their ointments sepulchre-wards. But our Lady abode still at home, and prayed to the Father of Heaven, saying: "Father of mercy and pity, you know well that my Son is dead, and was shamefully hanged between thieves, and I helped to bury Him with my hands. I know well that

You are of might and power to restore Him again to me whole and sound; and, therefore, have mercy on me. I beseech you High Majesty that you would give me Him again. Ah! Lord, where is He? why tarries He thus long from me? Send Him to me I pray you, for my soul cannot rest till it have Him. Ah! my dear sweet Son what is become of Thee? what dost Thou? Why tarriest Thou so long? I pray Thee, my dear Son, dwell no longer from me. For Thou Thyself saidst Thou shouldest rise the third day: and this is the third day, my dear Son. Not yesterday, but before yesterday was that ill day, that bitter day, that wretched day, the day of sorrow and of mirkness, the day of separation and of bitter death. Therefore, my dear Son, this day is the third day. Therefore, rise up now, my Joy and my Comfort, and come again to me: for above all things I desire to see Thee. I pray Thee that Thy again-coming may gladden me whom Thy departing has greatly miscomforted, and solace me with Thy blessed presence whom Thine absence has greatly heavied. Come again now Thou my well-beloved Son. Come my Lord Jesu. Come Thou, my only hope. Come to me, my dear Child."

And whilst she thus prayed, with lovely tears, suddenly came our Lord Jesus in clothes as white as any snow, His Face shining like the Sun, all beautiful, al glorious and all full of Joy, and said to His Mother, "Hail, holy Mother." And quickly she turned herself

and said, " Art Thou my dear Son Jesus ? " and with that she kneeled down and worshipped Him. And He lowly bowed, and took her up and said," My dear Mother, I am your Son, and I am risen, and I am with you." Then they rose up together, and she embraced and kissed Him, and tenderly and lovingly leaned on Him, and He tenderly and meekly held her up. Afterwards, they stood together, ever she beheld on His Face, and the wounds in His Head and in His Feet, and all over His blessed Body ; she asked Him if all His pain and distress had passed away from Him. Then He said : " Yes, my dear Mother, I have overcome sorrow and woe and shall no more feel them : but I am and shall be in endless Joy and Bliss." Then said our Lady, " Now blessed by Thy Father, my dear Son, Who has thus given Thee to me : in heaven and earth praised and magnified be His holy Name, in world of worlds without end, Amen." Then stood they together with great joy and gladness of heart, holding their speech all in joy and in delight of love. And our Lord Jesus told His Mother how He had delivered His people out of hell, and all the miracles and wonders He had done these three days. Lo ! this is now a joyful gladsomeness and a merry Pasch.

How Magdalene and her Sisters came to the Sepulchre.

Mary Magdalene and the other two Maries come early in the morning to the sepulchre with their ointments, as I said before. Without the gates of the City,

they bethought themselves of the pains, afflictions and passion of their Master, and in every place where they knew that He had suffered any special pain, they kneeled down, kissing the ground, sorrowing and sighing together. " Here we met Him bearing His Cross, when His Mother swooned for sorrow. And here turned He Him again to the women of Jerusalem. And here laid He down His Cross for weariness, and upon this stone He leaned Himself a little. And here was it that they shot Him forth so fiercely and cruelly and spit in His face, and made Him go so fast. Here they stripped Him and made Him naked, and here they fastened Him on the Cross." Then with great weeping and sorrowing they fell to the ground and worshipped the Cross and kissed it—for it was all red with the precious Blood of our Lord Jesu. After that, they rose up and went to the sepulchre, and said to themselves : " Who shall remove us this stone from the door of the monument ? " And when they came, they found the stone laid on one side, and an angel sitting there on that said to them : " Dread not," he said, " Ye seek Jesus of Nazareth Who was crucified : He is risen, He is not here." And they, seeing that they were deceived of their purpose, for they thought to have found the Body of Jesus, they took no heed to the angel's word, but came again all frightened to the disciples, and told them that their Lord's Body was taken away.

RUNNING TO THE GRAVE.

Then Peter and John ran to the grave as S. Luke says. Behold them well how they ran : and Magdalene and her

companions ran with them. They all ran to seek Jesus their Lord, their heart, their soul. They ran full truly, full lastingly, full busily. When they came to the grave they found nought but the kerchief, and the clothes that He was wound in. Have now pity and compassion on them, for they were in full great tribulation and thought for their Lord. They sought Him, but they found Him not, and they wist never what they might do : therefore Peter and John went home sore weeping again for sorrow. But the three Maries waited still at the grave. They came and looked into the grave : and they saw two angels sitting in white clothes, that said to them : " wherefore seek ye the living with the dead ? " But they took no heed to the Angels' words, nor to no vision of the angels, but of the Lord of angels. Then two Maries withdrew them a little and sat down sore weeping. But Mary Magdalene wist not what she might do : for without her Master she could not live, and there she could not find Him, nor wist she ever where to seek Him ; and therefore she stood still at the grave weeping, often and often looking into the grave ; for ever she thought to have seen Him there where she buried Him. Again she saw the angels sit on the grave, who said : " Woman, why weepest thou ? What seekest thou ? " And she answered and said : " for they have taken my Lord away, and I wot not what they have done with Him."

See now here a wonderful working of love, a little before she heard the angel say that He was risen, and

again of the other two that He lived, and yet had she no remembrance of all this, but said: "I wot never what they have done with Him." All this recklessness of all outward things and also of the angel's words was caused by the great love and desire she had to her Master and her Lord Jesus: for she could not speak, hear nor think but of our Lord Jesus.

When she had thus a long time wept, and took no heed of the angels; her Love and her Master Jesus could no longer withhold Himself from her. Then our Lord Jesus said to His Mother that He would go to comfort her. And our Lady was well satisfied at that and said: "Go, my blessed Son, on my blessing and comfort her: for great is the love wherewith she loves Thee, and great was the sorrow that she had for Thee and for Thy death. I pray Thee, my dear Son, that Thou come soon again to me."

How our Lord appeared to the Magdalene.

Our Lord Jesus came then to the garden where His grave was, and met there with Mary Magdalene and said to her, "Woman, why weepest thou?" And yet she knew Him not, but weened He had been the gardener; and like a woman full of thought she answered Him and said, "Sir, if thou hast taken Him away, tell me where Thou hast hid Him, and I shall take Him." Behold here now, how weepingly, how meekly, how devoutly she prayed Him to tell her of Him whom she sought: she hoped

ever to hear some new tidings of Him whom she loved. Then our Lord called her by her homely name, " Mary." Then waked she at His voice as out of a dead sleep, knowing His sweet voice and with great joy, she said " Rabboni," that is to say, " Master." " Lord," she said, " You are He Whom I seek, why have You thus long hidden Yourself from me ? " And then she ran and fell down at His Feet and would have kissed them. But our Lord Jesus raised her up to heavenly and to spiritual love, that she should no more seek Him here in earth by fleshly affection, only beholding His manhood as pure man only ; but that she should love Him ghostlily, by ghostly affection, beholding Him as God in man. And therefore He said to her : " Mary, touch Me not, for yet I have not ascended up to My Father," as who should say, in this human form in which thou seest Me with thy bodily eye, am I not equal to My Father, but less than He : therefore, touch Me not so : " But go say to my Brethren that I ascend up to My Father and your Father, My God and your God. Said I not to thee before that I should rise up the third day ? why seekest thou Me in My grave ? "

Then answered she : " Soothly, dear Master, I have had so great sorrow and mourning for Your bitter Passion and death that I had forgotten all things save only Your Body that was dead, and the place that I buried You in : and, therefore, I made this ointment this morning to have anointed Your Body with. Blessed be Your High

Worthiness that vouchsafed to rise again and come to us!" Then stood together Jesus and His dear Love with great joy and gladness. She beheld Him full truly and carefully, and asked Him of many things, and He answered gladly to all her askings. There was then a joyful standing, for although our Lord bade her not to touch Him, I can not believe but that she afterwards touched Him full tenderly before she went, both kissing His Hands and His Feet . . . . . when they had thus stood speaking together, our Lord said it behoved Him to go and comfort more of His brethren and friends. Then her face changed, for she would never have gone from Him. Then she said to Him: "Lord, I think Your living among us here may not be as it has been. But I pray You, dear Lord, that You forget me not. Have mind of all the kindness and goodness You have done unto me, that they never be lost in me, and think of the great homeliness and love You have had to me."

And then He bade her that she should not fear; "but be faithful and stable for I shall evermore be with thee." Then she took His blessing, and He went forth, and she came to her companions and told them all that she had heard and seen. Then were they glad of His uprising: but because they had not seen Him, they went with her mourning.

How our Lord appeared to the Three Maries.

As these three Maries went together in the way our Lord Jesus appeared to them and said, "Hail ye!"

Then they made great joy and fell down and held His Feet. Then, they beheld Him intently, and asked of Him diverse things, and received of Him might and grace, and they made also great joy and mirth. Then bade our Lord Jesus that they should go to His brethren and bid them go to Galilee, for there they should see Him as He told them before. Behold here, that the Master of meekness called His disciples Brethren : this virtue of Meekness dwells evermore with Him. But if thou wilt have understanding and ghostly comfort of this that I have said, thou needest in every place and deed to be present with thy soul as if thou wert truly there in body : and the same with all that I am going to say.

How our Lord appeared to Joseph of Arimathæa.

When our Lord Jesus had gone from the aforesaid three Maries, He appeared to Joseph of Arimathæa, who buried Him. For the Jews had taken him for our Lord's sake, and shut him in a house and sealed the doors with great care so that he should not get away : for after their sabbath day they had settled to slay him. Therefore our Lord appeared to him and set him in his own house in Arimathæa, and burst the seals and locks. And then He appeared to James the Less, that made a vow that he would never eat meat till he saw our risen Lord. Then said our Lord Jesus to him and to the others that they should set a board. And He took bread and blessed it, and gave them, saying " Eat now, my dear Brethren, and make merry ; for the Son of Mary is risen from the dead."

How our Lord appeared to Simon Peter.

When Mary Magdalene and her companions had come home and had told the disciples that our Lord was risen and how He had spoken with them: Peter was heavy that he had not seen our Lord Jesus, and for greatness of love he could no longer wait, but went forth alone sepulchre-wards—for he wist never else where to find Him. And as he went, our Lord appeared to him in the way saying, "Peace be to thee, Simon." Then Peter beat himself on the breast and fell down to the ground with bitter tears and said: "Lord, I acknowledge my trespass, for I forsook you and ofttimes denied you:" and after he fell down and kissed our Lord's Feet. But our Lord mercifully took him up and bade him dread Him not, "For all thy sins are forgiven thee, I know well, as I told thee before. And therefore, go now and stablish thy companions and brethren; and trust certainly that I have overcome death." And Peter beheld Him steadfastly, and all His limbs and His wounds, and fell down to the ground and wept full tenderly. But our Lord took him up and comforted him; and gave him His blessing and parted from him. And Peter came again to our Lady and to the disciples and told them all together. Thou shalt understand that the apparition to our Lady is not written in the Gospel, and, therefore, I set it before all the others, and so it seems that Holy Church holds it, as it is more fully shewn in the legend of His resurrection.

How our Lord Jesus appeared to two Disciples going to the Castle of Emmaus.

As two disciples of Jesus went to the Castle of Emmaus, all dismayed for their Master, and heavy for the mischances which had befallen; our Lord appeared to them in the likeness of a pilgrim, and went with them speaking words of health, as thou readest more fully in the Gospel. At the last, they made Him come in with them, and as they sat at supper, they knew Him in breaking of bread; and at once He vanished away from them . . . . and then they rose up and went to Jerusalem and told the other disciples what had befallen them in the way, and how they knew Him in breaking of bread. As they stood together speaking of our Lord, He came and stood in the midst of them and said, "Peace be with you." Then all His disciples fell down to the ground acknowledging their trespass, that they had so unkindly forsaken Him, and welcomed Him with great reverence and gladness. Then said our Lord to them: "Rise up, my dear Brethren, for all your sins are forgiven you." He stood homely among them, shewing the wounds of His Hands and Feet and Side. Then he opened their ghostly wits that they might understand Holy Scripture and know the private things of His Passion and Resurrection. Then He asked them if they had any meat, and they brought forth before Him fish and a honey-comb: and He blew on them and gave them the Holy Ghost.

Behold how all these things were of ghostly joy and gladness. Then were the disciples glad and fain that they had seen our Lord ; then made they joy and mirth before Him, that before were heavy and sorry. With how merry faces, thinkest thou, they laid meat before Him, how goodly and how faithfully they served Him : and how joyful and jocund they stood before Him. Behold also our Lady there, for all the disciples were gathered to her for succour and comfort. Behold her now with glad appearance seeing all this, and homely sitting by her dear Son and serving Him full lovingly. Our Lord Jesus took service gladly of her hands, and worshipped her reverently before His disciples. I pray thee, forget not Mary Magdalene, that well-beloved disciple of Jesus, an apostle of all the apostles, how she in her old manner sat at her Lord's Feet devoutly hearing His words : and whatever she could do she did with great gladness and all her heart's affection. Ah ! how blissful was that house then, in the which both God and Man sat, with His Mother, Queen of Heaven, and all His other dear darlings ! Great joy was then to be with them. Thinkest thou not there was here great comfort? Soothly, I trow yes, if thou hast any love or devotion. But our Lord dwelt not with them but a while, for it was late when He came to them. But I trow they prayed Him of His great meekness that He would not go so soon from them. Hopest thou not that Mary Magdalene held Him still by the skirt, full trustily with great boldness, that He should not so soon go from her?

Our Lord Jesus stood among them clad in clothes of glory brighter than the sun, whiter than the snow At the last, our Lord Jesus took leave of His Mother and she also of Him, and He blessed them all, and went forth ; and they all fell down on their knees and prayed Him with great reverence and desire of His soon again-coming.

And so they dwelled in great desire for the again-coming of their Lord and Master, whom before they were wont to have so much at their pleasure. Thou mayest see now how often this day thou hast had a Pasch, for each of these appearings is called a Pasch. But peradventure thou hast heard them, but hast felt no gladness nor ghostly comfort of Christ's Passion. I trow truly that if thou couldest have pity and compassion on His Passion, and hadst thy heart and thy mind gathered together and not distracted about in the world about other things and other phantasies, that thou shouldest feel in everyone of these appearings a new Feast ghostly, and a new Pasch. And every Sunday thou shouldest have it so, if thou wouldest on the Friday before with whole mind and fervent devotion have sorrow and pity for Christ's Passion ; for the Apostle says : " if we be companions of Christ's Passion " having pity and compassion on His pain and distress that He suffered here for us, " then on the same manner shall we be companions of ghostly comfort," and endless Joy, which He has ordained for all those who here heartily love Him with all their might.

The which joy and comfort may He grant us, Who bought us with His precious Blood, Jesus Christ. Amen. Amen. Amen. Pure charity.

Here endeth Bonaventura, concerning the Mysteries of the Passion of Jesus Christ.

Of all things it is best
In thy heart to fix Jesus fast } And love Him above all things.

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Ever when tempted, make me see,
Beneath the olives' moon-pierced shade,
My God, alone, outstretched, and bruised,
And bleeding, on the earth He made ;

And make me feel it was my sin,
As though no other sins there were,
That was to Him Who bears the world
A load that He could scarcely bear.

F. W. Faber.

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